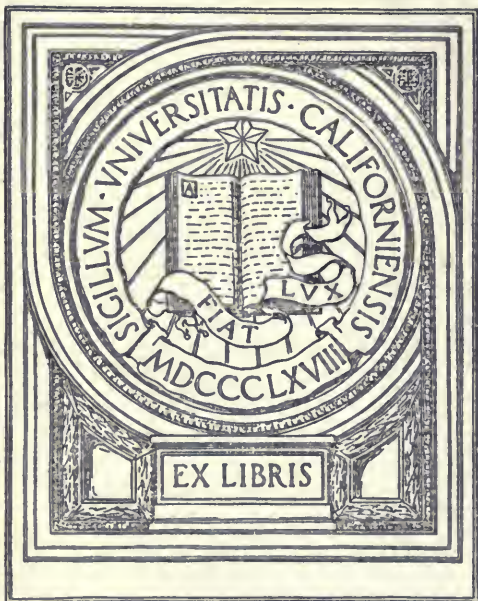




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LIFE IN WASHINGTON.



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L I F E
IN
W A S H I N G T O N,
AND
L I F E H E R E A N D T H E R E.

BY
MARY J. WINDLE,
AUTHOR OF "LEGENDS OF THE WALDENSES," "TRUTH AND FANCY," "LIFE
AT THE WHITE SULPHUR," ETC.

"We have one human heart:
All mortal thoughts confess a common home."
SHELLEY.

PHILADELPHIA:
J. B. LIPPINCOTT & CO.
1859.

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TO
MISS NARCISSA P. SAUNDERS,
OF NASHVILLE, TENNESSEE,
AS A TRIBUTE OF SINCERE REGARD AND PERSONAL
FRIENDSHIP,
THIS VOLUME
Is Affectionately Inscribed.

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P R E F A C E.

THIS book is neither more or less than it pretends to be; a collection of miscellaneous and wayward sketches, which have already had some publicity in the leading journals of Charleston, S. C. I have endeavored to avail myself of various corrections and alterations suggested by known and unknown friends in the hope of rendering my book as worthy as possible of your indulgence. If it relieves a passing hour of solitude or discomfort; shortens a dreary evening, or makes a rainy day more endurable, I am repaid. I speak not of the greater happiness of knowing that my inmost thoughts find their echo in your hearts, awakening pleasant emotions and generous aspirations.

WASHINGTON CITY, }
November, 1858. }

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LIFE IN WASHINGTON,

AND

LIFE HERE AND THERE.

I.

APPEARANCE OF THE CITY AT THE OPENING OF CONGRESS.

WASHINGTON, NOVEMBER, 1856.

CONGRESS opens on Monday next, and our city gives notice of its near approach by the usual premonitory symptoms. The streets and the people have an air of *fête* and expectancy. Shop windows display more than their customary attractions. New wares and elaborate habiliments for belle and beau are artfully and invitingly set forth to view. Hotels have their reinforcements of waiters and runners—some lounging round the brick-faced Babylon, and some thrown out like scouts in advance of a position, while long lines of posted play-bills show that all the amusements of the “season” have commenced.

The gregarious instinct which annually assembles in this “Mecca” for winter pilgrims its migratory

crowd, is impelling thitherward a streaming population. Baggage-wagons roll over the tormented stones, exhibiting a complication of patent-leather boxes, of such curious novelties of construction, as though the trunkmaker had been working a problem. Washington is already thronged with claimants, expectants, reporters, and—would you believe it?—(I know you won't, for the fact seems too great an enormity,) office-seekers.

Yes, dear distant reader, our city is already thronged with men having no other business here than to solicit remuneration for their votes at the last election. Some come to ask *anything*; some to ask *everything*; some to ask *nothing*—but only to make it known that *something* would be extremely acceptable. One declares that he cares not a fig for reward himself, but his friends will not let him rest until he prefers his claims; another thinks it his duty to offer his services where he feels he might be of use to the public; a third abhors the idea of office, but he has a sincere regard for Mr. Buchanan, and would accept any little post with three thousand a year, just to oblige him!

And to hear them talk, you would conclude they have the whole weight of the last campaign on their shoulders. There are some two or three who have been the prime cause of Mr. Fremont's defeat—they have documents to prove it.

Alas! for the distinguished Pennsylvanian!

Though of such moral magnitude that he is unable to eat a sandwich without being penny-a-lined into a paragraph; yet Sinbad, with the old man of the sea on his despairing back, is the symbol of his condition.

Our city on Thanksgiving evening presented a gay and spirit-stirring scene. The dwellings in the principal streets were illuminated in honor of our recent victory. In most of these friends had been invited for the occasion; and the brilliantly lighted rooms presented a beautiful appearance. In many of them the balustrades were lined with spectators, those of the lower rooms with guests, in rich dress, and in the upper department with the domestics,—exhibiting a spectacle which could not easily be equaled.

The evening closed with a fine display of fireworks. Stars were flung flaming from exploded rockets. Fiery serpents darted into the air with the grace of winged arrows, and then floated down through the dewy atmosphere in clusters of starry showers.

The English Opera Troupe appear on Tuesday evening. Our musical world are anticipating a good deal of silvery warbling from Miss Pyne's exquisite throat.

The latest *on dit* of the day here is, that Gen. Cass has been tendered a seat in the Cabinet, and has accepted it.

II.

SCENE IN THE SENATE AND HOUSE ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE SESSION.

WASHINGTON, DECEMBER, 1856.

DECEMBER set in yesterday, bright and sunny as this most deceptive month occasionally does, as if to add unnecessary bitterness to the biting blasts of its successor.

Everything seemed to greet old Winter joyfully. The public grounds wore a summer smile; even the stones seemed to demonstrate their joy, receiving the wheels with a cold, hard, yet hilarious sound of welcome. The radiant faces of those practical geographers called hack-drivers, testified *their* welcome as they rattled along.

We doubt whether Napoleon felt half so triumphant on his road to Paris, at the close of his Italian campaign. We were one of the throng who were, on this day, attracted to the Capitol to witness the opening of the session. There was no change in the exterior of the dreary passage we traversed on our way to the Senate-chamber. We ascended the same chilly stone steps; passed along the same mouse-trap gallery, with its covering of half obliterated oil-cloth, and were admitted by the same polite door-keeper.

Within the Chamber not an object had been altered. The same Speaker's chair and crimson hanging; the same face of Washington overlooking all;

the same bright Turkish carpet, well-stuffed arm-chairs, and rose-wood desks, the last gleaming with a little more polish; the self-same reporters, with fresh sheets of wire-wove before them, and pens pointed to second the movements of the Thirty-third Congress; the same *petite* pages, only a little increased lengthways. The desks exhibited the same process of mind-mongery; the same loads of papers, petitions, circulars, uncut copies of magazines, and out-of-the-way letters,—one asking for autographs; another from a fond mother, recommending some miracle of a son for a place under government; and a third urging the speedy settlement of the French claims,—penalties which public men have to pay for distinction.

We were struck with the different aspect of the desks; on some the papers were arranged with much precision, while others looked careless and desultory, as if in a state of siege. On one the papers were so multifarious as to afford no ground for concluding with any confidence the owner's political creed; while on another a copy of the *Tribune*, that lay among other straggling journals, lets you fully into its owner's politics—the exactest possible type of his creed.

When we entered, the newly-arrived Senators were exchanging salutations—dislocating each other's wrists in token of amity. The honorable Senator from —— even went to the frantic extremity of giv-

ing his whole hand, instead of the customary three fingers. Apropos of this distinguished gentleman and his companion from Massachusetts, who officiate together as the minute-hand and hour-hand of the same dial—they both seem a little lowered from their pedestal by the defeat of Mr. Fremont. The face of the former is more rigidly grave, while his companion—the bold, the successful, the triumphant, who “draws out Leviathan with an hook, and bores the jaw of Behemoth with a thorn,”—looked thoroughly cast down.

At 12 o'clock, the Senate was called to order by Senator Bright in the chair. After some delay, a committee was constituted to wait upon the President. This, with the reception of a message from the House, closed the business of the day, and at one o'clock the Senate adjourned.

Passing over to the House, we found every nook and corner of the galleries alive with bright eyes, intent upon the scene below—a debate between two members; one healing poor Kansas' wounds with balsams and unguents, while the other was trying the probe and astringents, under the impression that momentary torture sometimes produces lasting cures.

The presentation of Mr. Whitfield, delegate from Kansas, had brought down the anathemas of the Republicans, and when we entered, an honorable member from —— was sitting in critical judgment upon

the South—extinguishing her public men by a home-thrust, and carving her delegates into mince-meat.

The gas-lamps are lighted; a brown fog is gathering over the streets, and blending itself with falling shades of night; while loud over all the din of wheels is heard the vociferous cry, "President's Message," "President's Message."

III.

MISS PYNE IN OPERA.

WASHINGTON, DECEMBER, 1856.

THE bills yesterday announced "La Somnambula," by the English Opera Troupe. The morning opened with a drizzling rain, and it was only toward noon that the sun made a supercilious attempt to shine on the sloppy streets, as though it considered them scarcely worthy of the effort. Opera-goers had scrutinized every cloud as an omen, and had exaggerated every streak of blue perceptible in the sky into certain evidences of clearing up, till at last the weather did clear up, and by seven o'clock the large theatre was filled with a select and appreciative audience.

The overture commenced; parties nodded to each other and smiled; ladies adjusted their opera cloaks and crumpled the play-bills; box doors opened and shut with slams, and dandies looked round with their "lorgnettes." The beginning of the first scene was

accompanied by perpetual exclamations of "First party," "Second row," "Take a bill, sir." Of course, it escaped unheard. The audience was hushed into silence, however, when, with a skip and a bound, Miss Pyne, as Amina, appeared before the foot-lights, a torrent of song pouring from her snowy throat. How shall we give our readers an idea of all the versatility embodied in her opening song. Trills of the most fairy-like delicacy, more ethereal than you would suppose it possible for human voice to produce, she flung out in sparks of music with a triumphant glee. A lark seemed cutting through the sky, pouring forth his joy in such a gush of song that the rapid notes seemed to trip each other up in eagerness of utterance. Mr. Harrison, as Elpino, was like one inspired. In the song "Still so gently o'er me stealing," his magnificent voice brought down the house in thunders of applause.

In political circles the absorbing topic of discussion is the removal of some score of Know-Nothings, who have for the last year filled subordinate positions in the House.

The vacancies have been filled by Black Republicans.

The "House" is still in the confusion of Babel. The Southern members look as if they were cut in granite, while the Republicans are sending squibs and crackers at them. They are deaf and dumb to all the efforts of the former to bring up Mr. Whit-

field, and will continue so until the arrival of some dozen absentees will give them a majority for his support. Their presence will, we hope, prove a cruse of oil for the surface of those stormy waves.

There has lately appeared here a weekly journal, (literary,) tall, slender, with a huge head by way of prospectus, and the smallest limbs in the way of advertisements, that any poor newspaper ever stood upon. And yet this attenuated journal has a plethoric title. It is called the "Weekly Bee." How long it will drag on its existence we know not.

Since the last session of Congress but few changes have taken place in the "Senate" and "House." A few ephemeral reputations have sprung up like Jonah's gourd; a few disappeared from the face of the earth, leaving only colossal skeletons behind.

The political aspect of things here will greatly embarrass social intercourse this winter. It is already beginning to manifest itself with the families of newly arrived members. It is impossible not to recur to the lines of Coleridge, so hackneyed by perpetual citation:—

"They stand aloof, the scars remaining
Like cliffs which have been rent asunder;
And neither heat, nor frost, nor thunder,
Shall wholly do away, I ween,
The wrecks of that which once hath been."

IV.

SNOW-STORM.

WASHINGTON, DECEMBER, 1856.

EVENING is rapidly closing in—a bitter, cold, ungenial evening; a biting northeast wind roars hoarsely in the chimneys, and moans through the leafless branches of the trees; while light flakes of snow are whirling and dancing in the atmosphere, making the surrounding objects appear doubly dark and dingy; the pavements are covered with an icy sleet; the gas-lamps burn dimly; and the few pedestrians who are abroad hurry onward with their mouths buried under comforters, or amid the folds of their overcoats.

It has been intensely cold all the week, and the icy sleet seems to reflect the bitter air up through the soles of your feet to your very heart. On the long terrace-ranges of the Capitol, where, on still summer nights, one can hear one's feet echo, and scent hawthorn at every step, the wind now quakes with a shiver, and whistles round the jutting corners of the huge building with sobs and wailings. The boisterous, bustling, blowing, chilling winter,—ugh! it makes us shiver to think of it. But yet it brings its own peculiar pleasures. The patron saint of little people, whose name is associated with toy-shops and sugar-plums, is lavishly distributing his annual

gifts in all right-thinking nurseries. Lispings Peter Parleyites and sweet baby-pets are on the tip-toe of expectation, the blood tingling in their veins, away down to the tips of their nice fat little fingers. Oh, those rare bright days, the days of our childhood! There were full a score of nurseries, in which no hour of day or night would have found us other than a welcome guest. We had friends within those nursery walls, who were not hospitable in words alone, suffering each other's presence with well-concealed "*ennui*," but friends in something more than in the name. In vain, among the cold conventionalities of life, shall we look for the warm and heartfelt welcome, the unrestrained familiarity of intercourse, which was part and parcel of our childish life.

Though it is the season of the year when Christmas cheer and Christmas charity should brighten all around, yet impending Christmas bills—those long, narrow papers which the French call a "*memoire*," as being the things of all others people are most likely to forget—make the holidays a trying time for people's temper. It is an epoch, when the gap which defies the best endeavors of people of small and precarious incomes to make both ends meet, is apt to neutralize the promise of peace and good-will toward men, which ought to sanctify the primeval festival of the Christmas year.

The streets do not present their usual gay and

animated appearance ; indeed, the slippery sidewalks render personal locomotion a rather critical exercise. Corpulent gentlemen may be seen walking with wonderful placidity, making no one movement of body that is not absolutely necessary to the task of progress, and holding themselves up, so to speak, *within* their habiliments, as if they and it, though unavoidable companions on the same journey, were by no means intimate or willing associates. If a little snow-bird hops down upon the icy footwalks before them, they pause until it hops off again, so resolute are they to enter into conflict with no living creature. To dispute the path in any other manner is out of the question.

The opening levee of the season is announced for New-Year's Day at the Executive mansion.

V.

DEATH OF MRS. DANIELS—SPEECH OF STEVENS, OF GEORGIA.

WASHINGTON, JANUARY, 1857.

THE last twenty-four hours have shaken, from their mourning pinions, heavy sorrow on one of our homes. Mrs. Daniels, lady of Judge Daniels, of the Supreme Court, was, last evening, so shockingly burned, by her clothes accidentally taking fire, as to produce death in a few hours.

Death, whenever it comes, is sudden, a shock always stunning, always overwhelming. But death in perfect health—full of life, without any previous sickness to sharpen the cheek or waste the frame; the awful hand of Omnipotence laid upon all the currents of life, saying “Peace, be still!” and in a moment, as it were, the beautiful organization, with all its physical and mental perfection, becomes a mere image of clay,—*this* is a vision of death in all its horrors.

A few short hours have severed the ties of years, hidden under the cold, damp earth features which beamed in health and joy from every accustomed haunt; the young mother is removed directly from the domestic circle to the narrow grave, missed from her usual seat—missed, but to be remembered only as gone forever. No intervening period of dependence on the part of the suffering, of unremitting attention and increased affection from friends, has taken place to partially prepare them for the last dread change, the final separation. Who may speak the agonies of such a death?

* * * * *

It had been rumored throughout this city—told in the drawing-rooms of the hotels, in the private parlors, and in the public saloons—that “Stevens, of Georgia,” was to speak on Tuesday of the present week, on the all-absorbing topic of slavery. At an early hour the galleries were filled to overflowing with

the families of our distinguished statesmen, members of the foreign legations, and dashing belles, with a sprinkling here and there of our best residents.

As we passed through the lobbies we were struck with the deep and reverential silence that pervaded the House. That vast crowd of listening faces were turned toward a shrunken and attenuated figure, the shoulders contracted and drawn in, the face dead and of the color of ashes. There was something grand in the mere spectacle of this shadowy figure, binding up the very breath of the House in a hush so silent.

When we entered, the speaker was pouring out a continuous volume of thought and language—arguing, defining, illustrating. He had little variety of gesture, and what he used seemed perfectly unstudied. He was evidently so thoroughly absorbed in his subject as to be quite unconscious that he had hands and arms to manage. As he proceeded, he occasionally raised one hand, and then suddenly struck it down with extraordinary force.

Before concluding, his whole manner changed. His tones grew solemn as he reviewed his political life. He spoke of the measures he had aided to pass—of his part in the Compromise of 1850. Then, in a strain of matchless eloquence, he proclaimed his fidelity to the *union* of these States.

He soared above the commonplaces of public speak-

ing; he rose above the mere politician, and declared his faithfulness to the principles on which our *Union* is framed; his faithfulness to the institutions which distribute the validity, while they secure the *unity* of the whole.

As he proceeded, his unearthly face seemed to brighten into fuller and ghostlier meaning; his attenuated form seemed to dilate; his voice seemed exalted to a trumpet-tone. The Speaker's hammer descended in the midst of this impassioned burst, leaving an impression upon the tingling ears of his auditors which many will carry to their graves.

This speech is considered a master-piece, pure, lofty, dignified, leaving an impression on the public mind of the patriotic motives of the speaker.

VI.

ENTERTAINMENT AT MRS. —.

WASHINGTON, JANUARY, 1857.

THE drawing-rooms of Mrs. — (excuse the name) were, last evening, resplendent. The clear, sharp light of the gas flooded the rooms from the cut-glass globes of the elaborate chandeliers; the hangings of crimson damask were drawn closely across the windows; French toys and vases of hot-house flowers littered the tables. In the dressing-room hall a dozen high-bred domestics moved about

as noiselessly as though they had been shod with felt.

In the supper-room, a cloud of light irradiated a table that reminded one of the pictured gorgeousness of "Belshazzar's Feast."

The company was an ingenious amalgamation, the perfection of "*reunions*." Among the various concomitants was Mr. —, who, when deigning to handle the pen, considers literature much the obliged party; and also the "member" from —, who makes us laugh at caricatures of our individual selves.

We could not but be struck with the swan-like grace and dazzling fairness of the lovely hostess, who glided from guest to guest, breathing to each some acceptable phrase or comment. This lady has one of those happy dispositions which cannot be persuaded that anything wrong or gloomy exists in the world; she sees everything on its bright side. Her husband is chained to the galley of politics, and, being blessed with a somewhat irritable disposition, he is always getting into some difficulty. Any other man would have been worried into his coffin ten years ago; but his wife smooths down his ruffled feathers with so gentle and so unostentatious a hand that he scarcely recognizes his misfortunes.

About eleven o'clock silence was enjoined, for Miss —, a lady whose voice would suffice to insure her immortality, had been prevailed upon to

sing one of those exquisite melodies which form a distinguishing feature of Burns's poetry. It was a performance which spoke far more fervently to the *feelings* of the company than the most labored professional exhibition. All stood entranced while she breathed that simple strain of Scotia's bard, which she had adapted to a melody of her own, and sang with a voice as sweet as a shepherd's pipe.

Before adjourning to the supper-room a gentleman appeared who seemed to produce quite a sensation. Belles claimed his acquaintance with nods and becks and wreathed smiles. There were so many anxious hopes that he would not suffer from the dampness of the evening, so many regrets that the weather should have proved so unpropitious, and so many entreaties that he would occupy one particular chair, where he would be protected from the draft on the opening of the door. Why, it was perfectly delightful to contemplate the interest which he seemed to create in the breasts of his attentive and anxious friends. And the invitations heaped upon him; if he profits by the lavish offers, he might dine for five hundred days to come at the expense of the public in general, and travel on borrowed wheels to the "Cataract of Upper Egypt," without the expenditure of a single seed of corn.

The innocent object of these overwhelming attentions seemed quite amazed. Not Shakspeare's Crookback, after his successful suit to the Lady Anne,

could be more smitten with astonishment at the discovery of his own unsuspected attractions. And yet he was wise enough to take things as he found them, without instituting an inquiry as to motives. He was all courtesy, all bland and smiling gratitude.

Our obtuse intellect at last fathomed the secret of this adulation. This gentleman, dear public, has very recently fallen heir to a fortune. He would have been edified, could he learn by spirit-rapping, the inquiries and discussions, as to the amount of the newly-acquired wealth, which followed his exit. Oh, the power—the mightiest power in our country—the power of money!

VII.

SENATE-CHAMBER—GENERAL HOUSTON—MR. CRITTENDEN AND
MR. PUGH.

WASHINGTON, JANUARY, 1857.

MR. ———, the Canning of the Republican party, spoke two hours this morning, and defended with great zeal the liberal principles of his candidate, whom he evidently regards as the Napoleon of freedom—the egg that is to bind together the jarring ingredients of the American pudding. The speech of this gentleman was a grotesque compound, including here a panegyric on Mr. Fremont, and there a fling

at Mr. Buchanan ; here a threat of what they would do in 1860, and there a ferocious attack upon South Carolina.

During the delivery of this medley we were struck with the attitude and employment of the different Senators ; some sat listening in silent wonder, as they would to the ranting of a Sir Giles Overreach ; others might be seen shifting their figures into all sorts of restless attitudes, looking at their watches or reading by snatches the newspapers ; some settled themselves in their arm-chairs with letters from home, and appeared to take no sort of interest in any outward event. Sitting on the step near the Speaker's chair, was a sweet-faced little page, busily engaged in gambling with himself, by tossing up a penny. Another open-eyed little fellow, with a soft shadow of reverie in his mild face, sat patiently looking at the speaker, striving apparently to comprehend the substance of what he was saying.

The Senator from Mississippi seemed to be assiduously employed in shaping a fragment of wood into some desired form, the floor adjacent being covered with a chaos of whittlings.

The Senator from South Carolina was lounging in his chair with closed eyes, and certain drowsy and somniferous symptoms led us to suppose the monotonous tone had lulled him into a doze ; but an allusion to his State by the speaker entirely destroyed the truth of our supposition, for, in spite of the indi-

cations of drowsiness, the closed eyes suddenly stared out from under the lock of silvery hair with unusual wakefulness and sagacity of expression, saying, as plainly as eyes could speak, they were *not* asleep, and had not *been* asleep, and never intended *to go* to sleep, when Carolina was in danger of being trauduced.

As the attack on his State continued, the honorable Senator became restless and excited, twitched, fidgeted, arose, shook himself, and, in a sharp, ringing tone, asked to be heard in reply. With ready fluency he placed the matter in its proper light, proved his State clear of the charge, and, with an air of dignified contempt, left the Chamber.

Finer subjects for pen-painting it would not be easy to find than some of the faces before us, and we propose to point out to our distant readers the appearance and traits of those forming the first deliberative body in the world. On the left hand of the entrance door our roving eye rests upon as formidable a looking person as any captain of banditti in Mrs. Radcliff's novels. You can see that this gentleman (Gen. Houston) has a contempt for conventionalities; for he ties his neckcloth in a very clumsy bow, and wears a tiger-skin vest, built as if for an Arctic expedition. His face is almost covered with menacing whiskers of an iron-gray color; and such shaggy and threatening brows overhang his eyes, that one dreads to look what kind of eyes they are. Gen. Houston's whole life has been a chain of romantic episodes, and

people overlook his eccentricities as they overlook the rough coat of a pineapple, because they know there is fruit at the core.

The gentleman at his desk, with a copy of the *Herald* before him, has an air of calm, gentlemanly ease, which is evidently the result of habitual intercourse with the most cultivated society. He is not one of those who every six years are transmitted from their State to the Senate-chamber, to pillow themselves upon a splendid sinecure, rehearse an annual speech, and, having accepted the destined number of invitations to dinners and receptions, await the warrant of a legislature's vote to terminate their political existence. As a senatorial orator, he universally and powerfully commands the attention of the Senate. The plainest subject in his hands assumes a loftiness and power which elevates the minds of his hearers, as much as it convinces their reason.

We enjoyed the privilege of hearing this distinguished man (Mr. Crittenden, of Kentucky,) speak on the melancholy announcement of Mr. Clayton's death; his speech was not long or loud, and delivered in a voice which trembled under the sorrow of the occasion.

The small, delicate, and very youthful figure, seated near the Senator from South Carolina, has, during the brief time he has been here, made a marked impression. His position, as he listens to the speaker, with one hand behind his ear, indicates

that his hearing is imperfect. Mr. Pugh is a young man—the youngest in the Senate—and the place which he now occupies in public estimation will, we think, enlarge.

This is delicate ground, dear public, and we fear to venture farther at this time. As yet we have only seen these distinguished gentlemen in their indulgent moods, and we can no more opine what they might become if exasperated, than one who has studied marine views in summer-time in the Bay of Naples can conjecture the aspect of a typhoon. We know not what ferocious phase Senator Nature may assume on reading these innocent remarks. If agreeable to all concerned, we may at some future day resume our pen-sketching.

VIII.

ENTERTAINMENT AT SECRETARY McCLELLAND'S.

WASHINGTON, JANUARY, 1857.

THE invitation cards of Secretary McClelland, issued last week, announced the opening reception of the season to come off at his residence last evening. The morning opened with a gay, dazzling sunlight; the air pure and bracing, and the sun playing pranks with inclined snow-flakes and pendant icicles. This snow-storm is an epoch in the life of our little

people; their hearts dance, and are mirrored in dancing eyes, and sit upon warm, loving lips, and ring out in glad voices, making the earth—winter as it is—radiant with beauty, and the air vocal with music like melody from a summer woodland.

As evening approached, there was a general excitement in our city homes; tramping of fat maids, and a general disarranging of drapery and furniture. For ourselves, we are not sure that we expected great pleasure from this gay crowd, but we liked the drive there very well. The snug comfort of a carriage, the pleasure of setting out with cheerful companions,—these small matters had for us an exhilarating charm; how much of it lay in the atmosphere of friendly feeling diffused about us, we know not. After a short drive through a brightly-lit street, we joined the long line of carriages which heralded our approach to the Secretary's mansion. After undergoing the perplexing, jerking motion which always accompanies a fashionable progress of this description, we reached the house, which presented a blaze of light from basement to attic. The ground-glass vestibule door was thrown open with a flourish by a grand-looking mulatto in white neckcloth and gloves. The hall and staircase was quickly passed on our way to the dressing-room, where we found a legion of angels in blonde and illusion. On descending, we found the drawing-rooms already crowded, and at the door we caught a glimpse of the hostess, a very

beautiful woman, in an exquisite rose-colored robe, edged with white plush, who was doing the honors of her house with an aspect of quiet elegance.

Our progress through the rooms was slow, for our escort was no adept in the polite art of inserting his elbows into the shrinking sides of stationary matrons, and our "*chaperon*" was much too gentle and courteous to rush forward through the opposing tides with the defiance of a "*belle*" of many seasons. We at length succeeded in taking our stand in a quarter of the room commanding a general view of the brilliant crowd. The appearance of the rooms was most picturesque. Groups of both sexes were bowing in complimentary conversation; sometimes formal, and sometimes in a strain of humor which broke through the phase of etiquette. Fair forms leaned on the arms of attendant cavaliers, who whispered compliments as they passed along.

In one direction the chandelier threw its shaded light upon the mild face of the host's niece,—a fair girl with heavy masses of chestnut ringlets shading her face, and a pair of joyous eyes looking out wonderingly from their ambush. In another direction we recognized the brilliant teeth and radiant smile of the lady of the Senator from Louisiana, (Mrs. Slidell.) Encircling her plainly-parted hair, shone a circlet of diamonds which might have been the ransom of a Great Mogul. The charm of this lady's conversation seems irresistible. There is an

animation, a fascination in it, which we have rarely heard equaled. The peculiarity of her phraseology, the "*abandon*" with which she speaks, the grace of her gestures, excite a perpetual interest, and leave such a delightful impression, that all seem perfectly ready to do everything reasonable and unreasonable that she may request.

In another direction we saw a fair, mild, simple-looking girl, with a japonica in her hair, resisting every attempt to be made something of. And so this gentle girl will continue as like what she now is, as yon sun will be to its present self when we, who now glory in its light, are shut away from it by the coffin-lid. Few changes come over such characters. They appear before us quietly and without ostentation, as the soft-eyed violets unfold their petals in the spring-time. The white wings are now folded and undreamed of, but the moment occasion requires it, the silver plumes will expand.

About eleven o'clock the silvery head of the honorable Senator from South Carolina appeared, pushing his rapid way through the rooms. He seemed to inspire new life into the circles he passed through, and one might trace his progress by the livelier movements and more mirthful laugh that followed him like the bubbling wake of a ship. Here, too, might be seen the *bachelor member* from North Carolina in full dress, from kid gloves to French boots; even the tie of his cravat "*comme il faut*."

How many smiles this gentleman has had wasted on him—enough to stir the very stones to feeling—and yet he contrives to dodge the whole artillery, and pass on!

Towering head and shoulders above all the world, we observed the “*witty*” member from Georgia, (Mr. Cobb,) who is expected to say what nobody else has a right to say, and it is all chargeable to a peculiar development of the organ of mirthfulness.

About ten o'clock the burst of a well accorded band, resounding from the basement rooms, acted like magic on the swarming crowd above stairs. In the dancing rooms there was a figure which attracted much attention. Her liquid eyes had in them a meek lovingness, and her manners were the very perfection of that excellent quality called “lady-like.” This young and very lovely person is the daughter of one of our resident citizens, (Mr. B. of Capitol Hill,) who was formerly “*Sergeant-at-Arms*” of the Senate. As we made the circuit of the dancing-rooms, with their brilliant chandeliers and voluminous folds of crimson that shut in the rich warm light, we thought of the dreary street and whistling wind without; of houseless beggars who sat on door-steps, or shivering slept with heads bowed on their knees. *Outside*, cold, biting midwinter; but *within*, a happy, merry time, where flowers bloomed, and comforts and luxuries were piled around like fairy gifts. *Outside*, one coating of

snow over all; *inside*, warm, glowing, and vivid, with jewels and elegance.

As we stood, surrounded with groups of fashion and beauty, our imagination called up abodes in this very city, on this very night—abodes of poverty, where the cold wind blows through the broken door, and paralyzes the shivering limbs. Forms of humanity, with lungs, and nerves, and *hearts*, and every capacity for suffering that we have.

And yet we are thankful that the highest sanctities of happiness are *not* dependent upon outward condition. Even in these abodes of destitution, duty and love may make the bare walls beautiful; and before the eye of Faith, the cold arch of this winter night may burst into a revelation of Heaven, and a path for those angels that come to help and comfort God's poor.

Lady!—you, surrounded by comforts and elegancies, feasting on dainties and rolling in luxuries—we can point you to other dwellings in this very city, dwellings of the really *suffering* poor, not in the wretched hovel where famine dwells confessedly, but with those who are ashamed to say they *want*; who find their cares increased by laboring always for its concealment. Is your heart so sheathed in worldliness as to feel no pitying thrill at this thought?

And yet those whom you pity, and count so unfortunate, have in their bosoms springs of happiness to which you are, perhaps, a stranger. Yes, there

are homes in this city where there is little more than a "dinner of herbs," which affection converts into a palace; shadows of sacred retirement where God is; arenas of earth's purest discipline, where the domestic affections flourish, and the dearest treasures of life are kept.

We are, indeed, poor judges of happiness or misery, if we estimate it by outward marks.

IX.

HOUSE SPEECH OF COLONEL KEITT.

WASHINGTON, JANUARY, 1857.

WE enjoyed the privilege, a few days since, of hearing the member from South Carolina, (Col. Keitt,) in a very able reply to Mr. Aken, Know-Nothing member from Missouri, who had made a severe attack upon the Catholics. Col. K. appears quite young, not more, we should think, than thirty, and has a strikingly buoyant, frank, and independent expression. His fiery and impetuous temperament is evident in his whole deportment, and even in the aspect of his desk, which generally presents a wilderness of papers, envelopes, pamphlets, etc. dispersed in all directions like people in a panic.

Col. K. commenced his speech in a low and rather indistinct tone, and it was not till he had spoken for

several minutes, that his powerful voice began to expand. His color rose as he alluded to the interest which, as a Southern representative, he took in the great questions which now agitated the country. Passing on to the charges against the South, he made a general but most masterly defence of the institution of slavery, proved its ancient origin, and produced extracts from John Q. Adams's speeches, showing his approval of the institution. He then took to pieces his opponent's rhetorical mosaic. He reviewed his attack on the Catholics, tore into shreds the words, and showed that not a single conviction could be discovered behind it.

But when he came to allude to the constant agitation of the slavery question in which the Republican party indulged, all the bitterness of his nature was poured forth. With a remorseless hand he stripped off the disguises of that party, and treated them as executioners might treat culprits bound to the wheel. How we wish we could give our distant readers some idea of his manner. One moment he dived, with an actual *bodily* diving, down into the abysses of his subject, to fish up an argument, then nailed the argument with *such* reprehensive thumps upon the innocent mahogany before him, until the articles upon it had a really tremulous motion. The loose papers seemed to have the palsy; the ink kept up a chilly chattering in its stand; one paper (the *Mercury*) incessantly nodded; another, (the *Courier*,) as if in

contradiction, incessantly shook its head; dear old John Adams's extracts shuddered under the blows as if they were hurt; a little box of Paris pens danced like volatile Frenchmen; only the slender sticks of English sealing-wax stood firm with characteristic stolidity.

This rapid and fervent manner had a riveting interest. His appearance of feeling, too, was irresistible. In a knowledge of whatever subject he undertakes, and a facility of developing it in imposing language, this gentleman need not shrink from a comparison with a single contemporary rival in the House.

While admiring the brilliant talents of this interesting speaker, we desire most distinctly to guard against the supposition that we do homage to his *disunion sentiments*. From these we deeply dissent. Who that has heard the great Compromise speech of the lamented Clay—that glorious speech that has gone up to immortality—can cease to remember the tremor of the voice which brought out his conception of the awful consequences of disunion? That speech was a parting legacy to his country. We have before our eye, at this moment, the tall and elastic frame, the inspired face, the speaking eye. Oh, the mournful desolation of that picture! Oh, the heart-rending pathos of that description! The very glance of his eye haunts our memory, as he dwelt upon the consequences of severing that bond which is cemented

by the blood of patriots. We hear again his ominous tones, as he warns his country to avoid that rock upon which so many before us have split.

We could not, if we would, rid ourselves of that warning presence. And yet men rise here—here, where the shadow of Washington forever tapestries the wall—and calmly contemplate an event which the statesman-like sagacity of that great mind labored so faithfully to avert.

X.

PRESIDENT'S LEVEE.

WASHINGTON, JANUARY, 1857.

IN sketching the President's "drawing-room," the only difficulty we experience is in bringing on a spasm of enthusiasm in traversing ground so foot-worn. Would you like us first to describe the surrounding glories of the "Executive mansion,"—its rich shrubbery, its evergreen gardens, its graveled walks, its picturesque irregularities? No, we won't. For now that the emissaries of the illustrated papers go scouring the country with their sketch-books, making private dwellings and grounds their own, it is really a work of supererogation.

You may, dear public, imagine the beautiful grounds of the White House to be like Portia's garden, the

spot where Lorenzo whispered thoughts so sweet to Shylock's lovely daughter; or the bower where witty Beatrice turned eaves-dropper; or you may imagine it like the high-walled garden, with its unguarded balcony, where Juliet lingered so long in the clear moonlight, dreaming of her Romeo.

Within, there was the usual crowding, disagreeable or agreeable as the case may be, the usual hum of voices, the usual nothings exchanged, which seem conventional among those hackneyed in such assemblages. The East Room glittered with the embroideries of foreign uniforms and foreign orders. As a mere picture to one who sought amusement, the panorama was interesting. Nothing could exceed in variety the dress, the appearance, and manners of the crowd.

In one direction might be seen a group of "diplomats," discussing with vehement gesticulation exceeding in ingenuity of pantomime all the deaf and dumb institutions of Europe, leading those at a distance to suppose them to be conversing by signs with the crowd. In a remote corner of the room a knot of Republicans had established themselves, to fight over the recent Fremont campaign, and discuss among themselves the propriety of model cottages for slaves, or some other philanthropical toy of that description. Every now and then the crowd respectfully gave way, as some member of the Cabinet, trying to forget mystic packages and official seals, swept

along with smiles and nods, claiming acquaintance with the most elegant of the women and most distinguished among the men. Comedy, too, was strewn thickly about. Mingling amid the gay dresses, were well-dressed rustics, evidently fresh from the country; wonder and delight openly manifested in their beaming countenances. As we glanced around the well-dressed circle, our roving eye fell upon a quaint-looking couple. One,—a little, thin, striking figure, whose complexion resembled one of Benvenuto Cellini's carving in ivory,—had a diminutive cap perched on the back of her head. If ever hair might be called expressive, that of this individual deserved the name. It curled naturally, but was compelled into plain bands, which it struggled against tenaciously, and, wherever it could, stole into minute curls of astonishing stiffness and variety. She wore glasses, but had now and then a knack of glancing over the top of them, with a pair of pale-blue eyes, in a most bewildering manner.

Her companion was a large figure; wrinkles long and forcible about his mouth, under his eyelids, and upon his brow. This worthy individual was dilating upon the turpitude of public men in general, making vague allusions to the mismanagement of the national business, and to the miserable pilots who held the helm of State. He held his head very high, and delivered these sentiments into the air when he

spoke, but scarcely bent from his altitude to address any one in particular.

It was whispered through the rooms that this worthy couple were from Utah Territory.

As the evening advanced, we left the thronged "East Room" for the "Crimson Parlor." Here groups were dispersed about; some in half-reclining positions on sofas and easy-chairs; some bending over the tables, examining a superb vase of choice flowers that made the air of the apartment heavy with perfume. There was a couple near us, who seemed to have a stock of small-talk on hand,—abuse of Washington generally; ridicule of the manner of living in these parts; the want of style, the absence of elegance, as if they had been accustomed to very great doings indeed,—an insinuation which their somewhat underbred manner and aspect failed to bear out.

Some six or eight brides from different cities were pointed out to us among the crowd.

One of the number, a lovely girl in white "moire antique," carried a gorgeous fan *à la Louis XIV.* Her appearance would have been noticeable in any society. There were smiles hiding in every line of her beautiful face, which was as rosy as the cheeks of Tennyson's Maude. No anxiety—not the shadow of a shade had ever crossed her imagination touching her future lot.

XI.

SNOW-STORM—MR. CORCORAN'S GALLERY—MILTON AT THE ORGAN—
PAINTING BY MR. WASHINGTON—GREEK SLAVE.

WASHINGTON, JANUARY, 1857.

SNOW is falling rapidly. A hopeless, heavy, per-severing, not-to-be-mended snow-storm—not falling in tiny showers, but leaving drifts, which we verily believe will last until April. Our sun is quenched in snow-clouds, which hang low and leaden over the white world; and our day is one continued twilight, the damp light coming in and going out at its usual hours, as though it acted only from a sense of duty.

Wild gusts of wind sweep, at intervals, against the long branches of the trees before the door, blowing them about wildly, like a group of heroines throwing up their arms in a tragic appeal to heaven. The howling wind carries its biting blasts beneath many a roof, and into many a cheerless chamber too forlorn and bare to bar out the intruder.

Up and down our avenue omnibus drivers in waterproof coats drive along with an improbable number of horses, and an impossible number of human beings. Round, rosy faces, hardly yet from the cradle, heartily tired of their weather-bound imprisonment, flatten their noses against the nursery window panes, or gambol in trundle-beds, and pitch tents with the sheets and blankets.

Everything in the streets is dispiriting. The mingled snow and wind renders them almost deserted. Now and then a solitary female, holding up with one hand garments already piteously bedraggled, with the other thrusts her umbrella in the very teeth of the hostile elements, for the purpose of selecting the driest part through which to effect the miserable act of crossing to the opposite side.

One of the most gifted writers of the day has said "that no interest of a high nature can be given to extreme poverty." We doubt its truth. Where will you find manifestations of a more beautiful self-sacrifice, than in the labors and in the endurance of men and women shut out from the world's observation in nooks and corners of this very city, amid the relationships, and cares, and struggles of life? We have seen nothing in this great metropolis of republican America so exalted as one of its most gifted spirits working out its end through every earthly obstacle. We have seen the wearying, petty humiliations of poverty, as they fell one by one upon the sensitive heart; we have seen the dignity of intellect trampled into the dust,—and yet they seemed to throw over these degrading circumstances an innate and consecrating power. Poverty associated with them became almost divine.

This last is a phase of "*Washington Life*" seldom bared to view, and little suspected by those around.

Mr. Corcoran has recently added to his fine collection here two paintings which have elicited universal admiration. "*Milton at the Organ*," by Leutze, contains a gallery of historical portraits; it is, indeed, the embodying so many separate and distinguished characters, which form the grand characteristic of this picture.

Cromwell lifts upon the canvas his huge head and grim visage; the closely-clipped hair in Round-head fashion, contrasting with the long curled locks and thick moustachio of Algernon Sydney, whose handsome features are clouded over with sorrowful thought.

"Does that low strain of music summon to his side
Those who betrayed him, seeming true and tried,
Those who in the glory of his young life's eagle flight
Shone round like rays encircling him with light?
Or do old voices call unto his haunted heart
Playfields, whose memory bids a tear-drop start,
Scenes from his early life, whose sunshine dwells apart?"

And sweet Elizabeth Claypole, Cromwell's beloved daughter, is there, with ruff and cuffs of glittering purity, which seem to be playing a game of rivalry with the little hands for the palm of fairness.

"She seems to hear some old familiar words
Set to a foreign air on those melodious chords."

The other painting to which we referred is by a new artist, who threatens to take the crown from

Leutze's head. This gentleman—Mr. Washington, a Virginian by birth, and a very young man—without advancing in the usual way from step to step, and testing his skill on portraits and inferior subjects, has launched off into the region of historical painting. After passing a year in Dusseldorf, he returned not long since with this painting, which had been ordered by Mr. C. It represents the clandestine marriage of a young French Cavalier to the daughter of a Huguenot. The moment represented is when the indignant father, with a band of armed men, break in upon, and interrupt the ceremony. The spirited attitude of the Cavalier is grand and noble; that of the female touching and womanly. If Leutze excels in vigor of imagination and graphic delineation, Mr. W. is not less distinguished for conception of character, delicacy of sentiment, and beauty of expression. The painting is remarkable as the production of so young a man.

The *sanctum sanctorum* of this gallery is a small octagon alcove, hung with crimson velvet, containing Powers's exquisite embodiment of beauty and loveliness—the Greek Slave.

What could have been passing in the artist's mind when he conceived such tenderness and beauty? Who shall estimate the rapture, the witcheries of grace and beauty that must have haunted him? What if his path was on the stony highway, and thorns pierced his feet! What if his path was dark,

he had an inner lamp whose smallest glimmer irradiated the world with beauty! Yes, we thank God, that he spreads his shield over the sensitive bosom of the gifted, and holds to their lip a cup of bliss denied to common nature. They have consolation which nothing can dim. They have the key to a bright world, where they may tread among flowers, with the light of imagination circling above their head. The world may frown, but the fires of adversity only burn away the dross; and, in the midst of all, walks, unseen, the white-winged angel. To them is given the talisman to unlock the portals of nature. Flowers blossom, wings glance, waters sparkle, stars smile, and leaves rustle; the green earth, with its jewel-work of flowers, its amber moss cups, and rosy clouds, all bow to them.

We may at some future day refer to other gems in this collection.

XII.

DEATH OF MR. BROOKS.

WASHINGTON, JANUARY, 1857.

It is but a few days since we were planning to give a "sketch" of Mr. Brooks, of South Carolina. We thought of what we should say of him; in what terms we should speak of the esteem in which we held him.

To-day we take up our pen for a sadder purpose—to pay to the dead some part of the honor we intended for the living. We bring our offering, but he is not here who should receive it. It may be well to occupy our thoughts with the excellent qualities which were embodied with so strong an individuality in his frank and generous nature. With the promise of a long and useful life before him, in the bloom of his years, he is suddenly stricken down. It is not for us to comprehend or question the hidden workings of that Providence who has cut him off. If the homage of deep and general sorrow can assuage the severity of private affliction, the family and friends of the late Preston S. Brooks should feel that the heavy calamity which has so suddenly fallen upon them, is not without alleviation. Few men in public life here have ever succeeded in securing so large and so sincere a measure of personal regard as the man to whose character we are now endeavoring to offer a tribute of respect.

Personal amiability was, undoubtedly, the most marked feature in his character. In saying this we would not be understood as endeavoring in the faintest degree to detract from his fine intellect.

Men of ability are met with at the corner of every street in Washington; men of great ability are certainly no phenomena in this metropolis of the nation. Any man of clear head, and settled disregard for the feelings and fate of those around him, may achieve a

considerable measure of success in public life. The success, however, will be one which will not attract the esteem and regard of his fellow-creatures while living, nor obtain for him regret when he is called away to another scene.

Far different was the case of the kindly, warm-hearted man, whose sudden loss we have now to deplore. Standing before his grave, we recall his substantial acts of kindness to those whose qualities of heart or intellect might seem to merit his consideration and regard. Few men can expect to be so much regretted.

What an admonition to form resolutions and habits; to respect and esteem each other; to cement society by kind affections; to be mindful that we have a common country, and a common purpose; and considering that in varieties of mind and information, there must be a difference of opinion, in candor and conciliation to throw over these differences the mantle of charity, which we all feel the need of ourselves, and should be ready, therefore, to grant to others, and act toward each other under some just estimate of the vanities of time and the solemnities of eternity!

His stricken family are, indeed, bereaved; into the sacred privacy of their grief we will not intrude. A gap, never to be filled, has been made there. In that distant home the familiar footstep, the familiar voice, will be heard no more. May "He, who tempers the wind to the shorn lamb," be their support.

XIII.

SKETCH OF THE CHILDREN.

WASHINGTON, OCTOBER, 1857.

DEAR readers, we are in a dilemma ! Before us are six little people, all in a row, pleading for a "sketch," backed by their mammas ; and mentally we behold the frowns and poutings of the anti-childrenites, who will, we fear, contemptuously drop this article with a determination to pass to some more congenial page, where they will not be obliged to read articles on the graces of childhood.

Nay, indignant reader, straighten that curl in the lip. Nearer to glory children stand than either you or I. Was it not by the example of a child the blessed Saviour of the world warned and exhorted his disciples, when they would have forbidden the company of those little ones ? Oh ! it was an exquisite fancy that made a great artist, in one of his noble pictures, form of millions of faces the floor of heaven.

For ourselves, we believe that there is poetry in children — genuine poetry — and we instinctively shrink from the man or woman who does not love children.

As we write, wee witching things are frolicking around us, and our purpose now is to draw your attention to one of the group—a child whose name we

think you will one day find in some biographical dictionary. Look well at her, dear reader. Pale, with slight limbs and spiritual gray eyes, and a look of thought in the straight, fine forehead. See, how she bewilders the little coterie with the things she has seen in her dream, the rounded periods falling from her bulbous lips slowly and with a delicious quietude that bewitches while it lulls the senses! She is a little taller than children of her age usually are, and if you had met her out walking, muffled in bonnet and shawl, you might not notice her; you met a pale, lady-like child, and that was all; but if you could see her in a room and speak to her, she would remain forever shrined in memory.

If a loved voice takes a careless tone, the soft eyes fill with tears, and the lip quivers; if a word of praise is breathed, a quick, vivid blush burns on the blue-veined temples.

Tread the earth carefully, sweet child; love the beautiful things which God has made, but shut that rich heart from every eye. Give all thy heart's wealth to Heaven; the seeds which it would rest upon here will sway and bend beneath it; there is no support for natures like thine; keep them for the angels.

There is little without to give a clew to the contents of the casket. Sweetness, and love, and truth, the qualities which attract the companions of this lovely child; *they* do not see into the depths of

mind and heart, the intellect and the affections braided closely together, and growing up in rich luxuriance. And yet, dear reader, she is *orphaned* and *dependent*. She has been pressed in one long-loving pressure as though the icy lips would grow to the warm living one.

“*Orphaned*” and “*dependent!*” What a world of meaning is expressed in those crooked marks! That lovely nature may soften worldly hearts, and yet we fear that she will live to feel a thrill which will freeze her very life-strings at undeserved humiliations; live to feel all the blood in her veins ebb back to her heart on the discovery that she is eating bread that is grudged to her. God and his angels keep thee, sweet Eva L——; reluctantly we leave thee.

But we must turn to our roguish, joyous, rebellious, coaxing little friend, Fred. ——, who is content to be amused, no matter by whom, and noisy, no matter where. How bewitching, with his trust in all the little world he sees; his beauty, which makes even strangers pause to notice him and ask his name! We see him now, standing in mock penitence before his doating mamma, whose premeditated words of grave remonstrance are changed in the utterance to epithets of endearment, as he throws his arms about her neck and half smothers her with kisses. Happy child, under shelter of an affection that covers him as with an angel’s wing!

And docile, yielding, caressing Lily K——, who

puts her little arms around our neck with a nestling action which sends a gush to the eyes. Lily is constitutionally fond of everything weak, small, and unprotected. She puts implicit faith in marvellous anecdotes of animal sagacity; indeed, the whole tribe of domestic creation turn, like dying sun-flowers to the sun, toward her pitying smile. The pigeons eye her from their dove-cots with soft, shy looks; the adult mouser purs murmurously as she approaches, and comes with its velvet feet and head lovingly depressed to receive the expected caress; while the ruffianly house-dog, sullen and intractable to others, has a singular partiality for her.

We must not forget impulsive, thoughtless T——, who, we are sorry to say, has a great many break-neck propensities. On our last visit to his mamma, the nurse was busied in teaching him the grand mystery of dining, that is, seated at a real table with a real silver fork; but little Harry evinced greater anxiety to sit on the table than on the chair. No eel was ever more lubric. Why, he slid from his nurse's arms like a thing immaterial, and the next moment was hanging out of the window, his nurse, in a spasm of terror, wiping away the tears with her bare arms. After being rescued from his perilous position, he was off hunting a tortoise-shell kitten from corner to corner, with a vivacity of delight.

XIV.

SENATE-CHAMBER—JUDGE BUTLER.

WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY, 1857.

WE will now fulfill a promise, and present our readers with a few pen-sketches of the most distinguished of the Senate-chamber, or, at least, our own enthusiastic appreciation of them. In approaching this delicate ground we feel considerable diffidence. To do unbiased justice to the character of the living is among the most difficult of tasks. Even of the dead we can rarely speak without undue praise or undeserved blame. How much more easily are we betrayed into error when we attempt to delineate the character of those who yet live to be wounded by censure, or mortified by injudicious commendation! Such considerations may well make us feel some delicacy in sketching those who fill conspicuous places in this deliberative body.

We commence with one who is conceded to be the most unique and original intellect in the Senate, Judge Butler. He has an inelegant, unclassic visage, with a mass of troubled, streaming, silvery hair, that seems as if it had been contending with the blasts of winter; his is the face of one difficult to lead, and impossible to drive, with abilities which give him a towering eminence among his brother Senators.

His power, as a speaker, stands acknowledged in

the admiration of both Houses. His noble defence of the South always reminds us of William Tell's fiery and indignant eloquence when his home was invaded. Like all men of impetuous impulse he is very restless: one moment pacing to and fro the space behind the Speaker's desk; another, giving the grasp of his right hand to some younger Senator; the next taking active part in the debates of the day.

More than any man in public life has he given the South reason to be proud of her venerable son; and prouder, because, in distance and absence, he never allows his heart to travel away from his native State. This is proved by his labors, his speeches, the impress of his whole life.

He has shown also that it is possible for the same person to be an able and dexterous legalist upon a point of law as well as a statesman-like reasoner upon comprehensive questions. We have enjoyed the privilege of hearing him in the Supreme Court on important cases. There he seems to hold the same pre-eminence that he does in the Senate. The moment a question is submitted to him his mind seems instinctively to apply all the great principles that are favorable or hostile. He possesses wonderful extemporaneous power for going through the most difficult processes of thought with the ease and familiarity of ordinary discourse. Venerable for his years, venerable for his abilities, and venerated

throughout the South for his fidelity to her interests, and possessing a dignity of mind that renders him infinitely superior to mere party spirit. In private life he is known as a warm admirer of every species of excellence, and fearless in the expression of that admiration. He is of a frank and generous temperament; and there are deeds in this gentleman's private life which will never pass away. They give a warmer tone to our esteem, and prove conclusively that he has a heart as warm as his intellect is ample. But this is sacred ground. This (long may it be deferred!) must be left to his obituary.

Seated near Judge Butler is a slight, slender figure, with a combination of the poet and the politician in his appearance. This is the young Senator from Alabama, Mr. Clay, known as one of the rising statesmen of the Senate-chamber. In debate he is noted for a classical elegance of speech, forming as strong a contrast to the harsher style of the Senator from Illinois as a Grecian temple to the grim bleakness of a Methodist chapel.

State Rights is this Senator's political pet, with which he is as closely amalgamated as a Smyrna fig to the fellow fig in its drum. He cultivates it as a favorite plant, waters it, prunes it, and supports it with sticks. Whenever this subject comes up he seems inspired; and it is in the support of this darling measure that his most brilliant remarks are

made. "*State Rights*" is this gentleman's department as much as the "*Navy Bill*" is that of Mr. Mallory, or the "*Pacific Railroad Bill*" of Mr. Gwin. For Mr. Clay to abjure "*State Rights*" would be for Peter to deny his Master. Though we deeply dissent from the disunion sentiments which these principles inculcate, we cannot but admire (in the political summersets of the day) this gentleman's steadfast adherence to the principles he professes. The moral beauty of this gentleman's private life might serve as a model for older statesmen. His lady is known as one of the most brilliant and accomplished women in the South.

XV.

PARTY AT SECRETARY GUTHRIE'S.

WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY, 1857.

WHEN a city belle expands into ecstasies concerning the delights of Washington to some country friend on a dreary day, vaguely alluding to the "diversified" amusements of the metropolis, the country friend may be assured that truth is not in her.

Nothing can be more minutely monotonous than Washington receptions and Washington parties, which are all formed after the same invariable model.

At the thirty or forty entertainments to which she is to be indebted for the excitements of the season, the fair girl listens to the same band; is refreshed from viands prepared by the same *cuisinier*; looks at the same diamonds; and, but for an incident or two, might find it difficult to point out the slightest difference between the "party" on the first of January and the one on the last of February. But experiences of these desolating facts do not seem to damp the ardor of those who are to be found hurrying here, year after year, in pursuit of pleasure.

Washington has so long been regarded as a sort of "*conservatoire*" of fashion, a university of *ton*, where young ladies may take degrees calculated to maintain their future reputation in the "*beau monde*," that these minor vexations are unheeded.

The second reception of the season, which came off at the mansion of the Secretary of the Interior, on Monday last, was a lively and agreeable party.

There were members of the "diplomatic corps," with their melting intonations and their polished Parisian idioms. There were novelties fresh from their French grammars; and there were others there whose business was pleasure, with no object in life but an easy, agreeable, and rapid annihilation of their superfluous time; in short, there was a fashionable crowd in most of the paraphernalia of their order.

The fascinating member from —— (excuse the

initials) was there; this gentleman has undergone so many matrimonial crises that he is growing an experienced tactician against the allied forces of his female adversaries. We hope his companion will not order her "*trousseau*" on the strength of his passing enthusiasm—for passing we fear it is. We have known him in love and out of love six dozen times; his heart is worn so threadbare that he has learned to mistrust even himself. He seems to give up to a momentary intoxication only to reassume a still more frigid sobriety; and were this fair girl, to whom he is so devoted to-night, to appear in unbecoming dress to-morrow, farewell to all his sentiment. We hope, in the present instance, it is not so; for, with all the Washington partiality for negation, it could find neither argument nor motive against this alliance.

His rival, who stood near, seemed as perplexed as Othello. Indeed, from his lugubrious face, we are apprehensive that the "*Police Reports*" of the "*Star*" will acquaint us some day with the melancholy intelligence of his having taken the altitude of the central arch of the "Long Bridge."

The Ambassador from — was there, looking as grave as a lord chancellor, and sufficiently dun of visage to warrant the supposition that he was in the habit of taking baths of chocolate. Madame de Stael says that a degree of solemnity attends every journey commencing with a sea passage.

From this gentleman's serious air and grave face, we opine that his imperial master has summoned him to his royal presence; and that the prospect of twelve days in a steamship has reduced him to this matter-of-fact condition.

The elegant-looking lady of Judge McLean, of the Supreme Court, was there, in a gorgeous crimson dress and one of those labyrinths of blonde, feathers, and velvet, which Madame Delaran says she is obliged to invent to appease the ravenous appetite for head-dresses of our Washington ladies.

Mrs. Noble, the very charming wife of a chaplain in the navy, was there.

When weary of standing—for party-goers in Washington do not dream of so plebeian a luxury as repose—we descended to the dancing apartment, a reeking sudatorium past the ascertainment of Fahrenheit. Conspicuous among the belles upon the floor was Miss —, of Kentucky, a queenly-looking girl, in black velvet and pearls, who walked through the figures like an empress at the Cobourg. This lady is "*chaperoned*" by the wife of the distinguished Senator from Kentucky.

Gliding through the dance—graceful as the down on a Scotch thistle—was a figure that attracted general admiration. This fair girl has seen the heather, with its purple eye, look up to the blue of the Scottish heaven, for she is from Inverness, Scotland, that land of "lights and shadows."

Miss ——, of Philadelphia, a very lovely piece of human nature, looking like a swan's-down muff, was also there.

The accomplished lady of the Secretary may congratulate herself on the pleasure afforded by her evening's entertainment, for her guests separated with the impression of a most delightful evening to swell the store of their social remembrance.

XVI.

SENATE-CHAMBER—JUDGE DOUGLAS.

WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY, 1857.

IN sketching rapidly the characters of some of the principal members of the Senate, we must premise that we propose to speak only of those whom we have heard sufficiently often to catch the peculiarities of their mind and manner; and, with regard to these, we beg to disclaim all pretensions to adjust their comparative merits and importance.

There are few men in the Chamber whose bodily and mental lineaments make so distinct and definite an impression upon the public mind as Judge Douglas. His figure—short, stout, and thick—would have been fatal to the divinity of the Apollo Belvidere, but is precisely such as befits a man of the people. His physiognomy, too, is rather stern and

heavy, and if you ever had any hint that there was a vein of acrimony in his character, you fall to imagining what expression that keen eye will take, and that heavy eyebrow, and that firmly-set mouth, when he is belaboring the Republican party. But when he rises to speak, you listen but a few moments before you forget everything, except that a man of ability is before you. He is a bold and independent speaker, and has the power of thrilling his hearers through and through; indeed, rapidity and boldness of thought are his inseparable attributes. He strikes on all the hard, strong points of his subject, till they ring again. His language is always sharp, and clear, and strong, and knotty; never soft; seldom beautiful.

There has been, during the last two years, raised against him a storm of rebuke and misrepresentation. Public meetings have denounced his ambition. Northern speakers have held him up to scorn, as the very embodiment of national evil. Northern journals have poured an incessant hail of accusation against him. But with the whole storm of unpopularity roaring round him, he sternly pursues his course, breasting the storm, combating the surge.

A portion of our country foresee in him a future President, with the White House in prospective, as much his future as the Tuilleries that of the Imperial infant, or Windsor Castle that of the Prince of Wales.

This gentleman is one of the self-made men of our country, whose elevation is in itself a proof of the admirable nature of our Constitution, which allows the lowliest to rise to its distinctions, while it compels the loftiest to labor. It is a glorious fact, with which are embalmed the springs of our national greatness, that here there are no barriers of caste, no terms of descent, no depths so low that enterprise cannot rise out of them, no heights so exalted that genius cannot attain them.

After many a struggle, Judge Douglas has reached a table-land, from whence he can look down on the path before him.

We desire, in the future, to allude to the superior abilities of the distinguished Senator from Virginia, (Mr. Hunter.) The very fashion of this gentleman's garments shows his abhorrence of restraint, for his clothes are so indefinitely cut, as to be an equally good fit for any other Senator in the Chamber. His neckcloth, tied carelessly, leaves his throat half bare; and such is his indifference to appearance, that a lock of hair is always falling over his forehead, or tossed behind his ear—never where it ought to be. Though negligent, he is never slovenly; at ease everywhere, and with every one.

XVII.

WILLARD'S HOTEL—RAINY DAY.

WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY, 1857.

THIS morning rose with a drizzling rain; the air, clogged and dull with moisture, only lightened now and then by an impatient, shrewish gust, which threw the small rain-drops full into one's face. Hour after hour, with the most sullen and dismal obstinacy, the rain drizzled down upon the earth. It was in vain to go to the window, from which nobody but the omnibus driver, in his water-proof coat, was to be seen.

Did you ever spend a rainy morning, dear reader, in one of those smaller worlds with which Washington abounds? Would you like to know what some four hundred tolerably good-tempered persons do, anchored down in these great Babels? On such a day we braved the dripping atmosphere, and, thanks to gum-elastic, reached one of those brown-faced Babylons (Willard's Hotel) as dry as a bag of Carolina rice, in defiance of the rain. In passing to the parlor, we glanced into the dining-room, where a late riser was busily engaged at the breakfast table with the wreck of a "*pate de foie gras*." As we entered the drawing-room, the first living object which arrested our eye was the buoyant figure of a child of some eight years, with her "*robe à l'enfant*" and tresses, flying through a waltz upon a young mas-

culine's arm; while exclamations of rapturous delight from those around attested the youthful loveliness and animation of this Venus in her teens.

Passing on to the adjoining parlor, we found the study of the various groups profoundly interesting. Upon a French lounge were a knot of lively girls bestowing their colloquial animation upon two or three unavailable representatives of the male sex,—whose income would not feast a sparrow,—after the fashion conventionally denominated “flirting.” Close by, a mild-eyed mamma was surfeiting a little golden-haired “Benjamin” with colored sugar-plums, forgetting that nothing but a Medea would condemn her offspring to promiscuous confectionery in this land of chemical substitutes.

At the piano, two bright-lipped Hebes were committing a grievous massacre upon the beauties of a new opera. In another direction a yawning masculine was passing a white hand through his perfumed curls, and crumpling with the other the morning paper into a toss-ball, as he listened to the notes of an old air on a guitar.

In the dim light at the southern end of the room, a cluster of little cherry-lipped fairies were having a grand tea-party, and their dolls must have been surfeited with the luxuries spread before them.

By one of the windows—made dim by the descending rain—sat a fair girl, with a mother-of-pearl work-box before her, engaged on an unfinished specimen

of "*broderie*." A single glance sufficed to show that her male companion was speaking tenderly, though we did not hear his words. His look was riveted upon her, not fully and freely, but with all the caution of one who cares not that his secret should be read by idle eyes.

She, meanwhile, to cover her embarrassment, employed her needle on the filmy web in her fingers with the most determined vigor, bending over it with assiduous industry. But notwithstanding her seeming pre-occupation, the eddy from her heart, which sent up its rosy scarlet over her whole face, plainly showed that she did not listen unheedingly to the low murmur that fell upon her ear. It was not difficult, dear reader, to understand and translate the varying color on her cheek.

In the quarter of the room where we sat, awaiting the entrance of our friend, four or five ladies were seated, engaged in conversation—a conversation we hardly think profitable to those concerned. One of the party was flaying alive her invisible acquaintances. One of her auditors—a sweet-faced girl—ventured to put in a palliative word, but she set it aside, and went on with her pitiless anatomy.

We have given you, dear public, a peep at *hotel life* in our city. Happy they who have a "*home*" in Washington, which, when its doors are closed, shuts out all save love and harmony.

XVIII.

SENATE-CHAMBER—GENERAL CASS—MR. TOOMBS, AND JUDGE
IVERSON.

WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY, 1857.

IN resuming our notice of the Senators, we desire to draw attention to a serene-looking person seated on the left of the door of entrance. He strikes one at first sight, as a man of thoughtful and reflective habits. Amid all the noise, and the perpetual passing in and out of people, he seems perfectly calm and abstracted, listening benignantly to the business before the Senate, and patting his hands together in unconscious approval of everything. There is no gayety in his look or manner, and he appears altogether absorbed in his own reflections. It is evident that for him the romance of life is over, or exists only in memory, and the calm shadows of that quiet twilight which precedes the last long night of the grave is rapidly gathering about him.

The life of this gentleman (Gen. Cass) substantiates in the clearest manner two principles of the highest importance to the aspiring statesman; that the nation eminently honors political integrity and private worth, and that no rank of ability destitute of moral character, can possess a permanent ascendancy in the public mind. Lofty in character, eminently honoring the moralities of private life, superior to the

temptations of public gain, his life affords a useful lesson to all. The rising politician who shall emulate him in his pure patriotism and stainless life, may scorn the assaults of party; while the statesman who reposes his popularity on the strength of his talents, while he insults public feeling by the license of his life, can never hope to attain the position of this venerable man.

About the centre of the cluster of desks on the right, and near the Senator from New York, may be seen an athletic figure, expanding into that portly *embonpoint* which seems the natural development of contented men as they approach middle life. The light streams through the large window behind the Speaker's chair right upon the desk at which this figure sits. As the light shines upon his countenance, it gives dignity to a very handsome and clearly-cut profile. Thick black hair clusters in heavy masses above an expansive forehead and richly-fringed dark eyes.

In the Senate the position occupied by this gentleman (Mr. Toombs) is unquestioned and elevated. In fact, he takes rank as one of the best speakers there. His extempore remarks are quick, reasoning, and acute; while his prepared speeches enchain attention. There is at all times, and on all occasions, an imposing vigor in his language, tones, and gestures, keeping alive in his hearers the conviction that they are listening to an able-minded man. His voice in

speaking is sharp and high, sometimes shrill and dissonant. We could wish more of the round, full, mellow tone. His warmth and nervous energy make him a most attractive speaker.

This gentleman's colleague, (Judge Iverson,) has a marked Scotch physiognomy, and a serious, dignified expression, like that of a man accustomed to think before he speaks. When you look at him you are not surprised to learn that he is distinguished in the Senate for his sound sense and accurate judgment. As a speaker, he transfers his view of a subject fully and easily to his hearers. His argument is clear; his reply to objections rapid and conclusive. With few shining points, with no violent appeals to feeling, with little declamation, he is simple, searching, strong, seldom impassioned, always in earnest.

XIX.

ELEGANT ENTERTAINMENT AT GOVERNOR AIKEN'S.

WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY, 1857.

THE most "*recherché*" and elegant party of the season came off last evening at one of those domestic miniature palaces, of which the "*west end*" of Washington can present quite a variety. The giver of this elaborate entertainment (Gov. Aiken, member from South Carolina,) has, during the six win-

ters passed here, contributed largely to the entertainment of our fashionable world. It was generally known that this gentleman had declined his seat in Congress, and contemplated leaving his native country in a few months for a residence of some years abroad. In consequence of this, the most elaborate preparations insured a graceful perfection of toilet on the part of the guests in honor of this farewell "*fête*." Our loveliest belles grew suddenly discontented with all their Parisian finery, and ordered splendid new dresses for the grand occasion; while Douglas's steam-heated "green-house" was rifled of its choicest flowers for bouquets.

The important night at length arrived, and oaths, flagellations, crash of panels, and an unintermitting plunge of irritated steeds, deafened the neighborhood. In the midst of this noisy overture we ascended the illuminated and garlanded staircase and entered the dressing-room, on the threshold of which we were saluted with a gust of perfumes, which we recognized as the incense offered by those within to the worship of their divine persons. Some half dozen African maids glided here and there among the moving mass of feathers and diamonds, as if placed there that their dark faces might throw out this dazzling array by force of contrast.

We paused involuntarily at the door of this exquisitely-furnished apartment, which a Peri might have sighed to inhabit. Groups of beautiful girls

stood before full-length mirrors, gazing down into the polished glass. Tapering fingers were passed over polished shoulders; and dainty-looking feet, in close-fitting slippers, were thrust from beneath fleecy dresses; volumes of ringlets descended over the dimpled shoulders of young girls with symptoms of the nursery still clinging to their personal appearance, their soft, blue eyes stealing timidly from their silken ambush up to the faces around them, and retreating behind the drooping lid with timid looks, as though chilled or scared back. As the dressing-room gave up its fair tenants, one by one, each came out gayly and airily, descending to the drawing-rooms as noiselessly as a bright mist rolls down a hill.

At the end of the spacious rooms stood three figures, like patient sentinels keeping watch over the arriving and retreating guests. The centre figure was above the middle height, and the perfect symmetry and finely-developed proportions of her form made her appear even taller. The graceful, voluptuous contour well became the drapery of exquisitely-embroidered brocade which fell around it in heavy waves of silver.

By her mother's side stood Miss A., a very young, simple-looking girl, totally devoid of pretension, dressed in white illusion, fleecy as the down under a bird's wing. Her white dress and the white lilies in her hair presented a fine and most tasteful con-

trast to the gorgeous drapery and flashing diamonds of Mrs. A. This unassuming girl will one day step into colossal fortune. And yet, dear reader, she will never become a "worldly woman." You might as well attempt to endow the swan with instincts of the eagle, or produce the foam and sparkle of a cataract in some level stream. Miss A.'s quiet manner and gentle air denote all that we have said; that she is essentially a home-staying, heart-comforting, trouble-assuaging nature, born to enliven a quiet household.

As we followed the stream toward the dancing apartment, an admirably-accorded band was pouring out the most exquisite waltz that ever breathed its harmonies on mortal ears. The walls of the ball-room—added to his residence by Mr. A.—were garlanded and adorned with such a profusion of evergreens and flowers, as to have the appearance of being fit for the occupation of those sylvan nymphs who were so abundant in the days of yore, or for those fairy elves who crouch within the lids of sleeping flowers. The orchestra platform was almost hidden in festooned branches; laurel wreaths, as graceful as stooping seraphims, formed the radii of its lattice-work, while its supporters lifted to the floor long, slender festoons of evergreens.

We should but show our own lack of power if we attempted to give any adequate idea of the panorama that here presented itself. There were foreign ambassadors who had taken their share in balls, banquets,

and masquerades, both in Paris, Naples, and Vienna, "diplomats" who had swam in a gondola, and serenaded under the balconies of Seville. There was the mantling bloom of girlish beauty, with its guileless expression of countenance; and matrons attired in satin robes and diamond tiaras, with a dignity of deportment more distinguishing than either. The whole presented the appearance of elegance and refinement, essentially different from the more promiscuous *reunions* of the "cabinet receptions," and were distinguished by a degree of exclusiveness and selection not always found at the former.

We have contrived to screen ourself behind a lady. Do you feel a desire, dear public, to join us? Come, then, take a seat on this French lounge, so easy that it may render somnolent the most brilliant talker; come, and we will only ask you to follow our outstretched finger as we point out those who are most prominent.

Before us stand two fine-looking men: one is the prosperous capitalist, the world-famed banker, George Peabody, who has roughed his way through the hard fare and hard work of a struggling boyhood, learning that a man must square his elbows who has to push his way through a crowd. The other passed his childhood in silken leading-strings, where he learned the wisdom of standing still, that his way might be pushed for him. The boyhood of one

has fed upon the corn, wine, and oil of this world; the other upon its husks.

But who is this passing down the rooms with the air of a queen? Her eye glances fearlessly around, calm, quiet, self-possessed. The tall figure, the classical head, seen to great advantage with braided hair; the features perfect, as if carved in marble; the complexion, but for its clearness, white and smooth as marble, too. The liquid eyes, with the shadowy lashes, belong to the lady of the Senator from Illinois. Near by, forming a strong contrast with her queenly air, stands a lily-o'-the-valley figure; very lovely, as the soft light of the globe-shaded gas falls over it, is that sylph-like form; very beautiful is the low, white brow, with its blue-veined temples and wealth of golden curls; the red lips, parted with a sunny smile, and the cheek, tinged with crimson, like a snow-wreath in the flush of sunset. This is the daughter of an esteemed official, Major Smith, recently married to an eminent lawyer of Louisville, Kentucky.

Who is this comes forward so gracefully, looking so fresh, so easy, so gay, his handsome face beaming and his manner winning to every beholder? This is the son of our former Senator from Delaware.

Here comes the merriest, blithesomest creature that we ever saw. It seems impossible to bring a shade of seriousness over that joyous face; if tears were to start from the eyes, they would be checked by a

smile or lost in a profusion of roguish dimples. This sweet girl is daughter of the member from New Jersey.

But here comes the lady of the Senator from Kentucky. Nothing can harmonize better than the magnificent dress, ostrich feathers, and superb scarf of lace which falls over it with such a gorgeous levity. Between the dress and the light folds of the scarf, relieved by the one, and tempered and half-hidden by the other, plays a diamond cross of rare beauty. This lady possesses more kind feeling than would serve a whole clique of the ordinary stamp of fashionables.

We see seated upon a lounge, with a circle constantly around him, a gentleman with a superb head, and a face which wears a beaming smile as if he loved the whole world. He is not an old man; but yet there is a patriarchal pathos in his expression and manner. This gentleman is the distinguished Indian Historian, (Mr. Henry Schoolcraft,) who has built an imperishable monument in the massive and splendid volumes, issued by Lippincott & Co., known as "*Schoolcraft's Indian History*."

He does not often frequent the gay entertainments of our city; for, we regret to record, he has been helpless for a score of years from a paralysis of the limbs, and is brought here to-night only in compliment to his old friend, Governor Aiken, who leaves the country very shortly for a residence

abroad. The placid cheerfulness of this gentleman's life, under a great affliction, helps one's faith in God and in each other more than many sermons. We have heard of few men more beloved, and of none more worthy to be loved.

America is accused of suspending her certificate of merit toward mental superiority till confirmed by the *vivat* of Europe; it is said we would hiss a Ristori if she were not first half-smothered in the bouquets of Paris.

Few have received such compliments as this distinguished gentleman. Diplomas from all the learned societies in the world, and the most flattering private letters from Humboldt, Baron Bunsen, and all the great minds of Europe reach his quiet study, though his extreme modesty prevents its being known beyond the private circle of his friends.

The daughter of one of our foreign Ministers stood conspicuous for her rare beauty. There was another girlish figure, sister-in-law of the Senator from Ohio, in white, with crimson flowers on her bosom. The expression of her face seemed a foreshadowing of that angelic likeness which we all hope one day to wear.

The daughter of a naval officer, in white, with infant body, and a japonica on each sleeve-knot, had eyes like a wet violet, and tiny teeth, like pearls, which, though so white, were not vain teeth, but kept retired, and only showed themselves on great occasions.

The Senator from South Carolina was the centre of an admiring circle.

The *coup d'œil* presented at the table in the supper-room was magnificent. A massive service of plate, cornucopias, pyramids, and towers of rare bon-bons and candied fruits met the eye. Among the servants in the supper-room was one in the livery of his master, with a skin like the inky cloak of the Prince of Denmark, reminding us of Walter Scott's "Caleb." Attention to the ladies seemed to comprise for him all the grace and poetry of life. There was something irresistibly comical in the dainty tenderness with which he strove to adapt his masculine tones to flute-like accordance with the soft occasion, puckering all his ebon features into smiling wrinkles as he did so. He seemed to officiate as a sort of honorary lord chancellor for the controlment of the junior branches of the colored populace of the room.

Behind the voluminous drapery of the window-curtains in the dancing-room, we noticed a little African of some eight years, having a dance all to himself, keeping perfect time with the music, with such vivacity of delight that his cheeks dimpled all over, and his black eyes seemed to float in radiance. Later in the evening, the host, while giving directions to the orchestra, observed the little fellow underneath the platform, where he was decorating himself with chains of the dropping laurel. He stooped

and patted the woolly head; and we were struck with the expression of the child's face as he turned it up to his master's. There was a look of affection in the little face which would have carried conviction to the mind of Mrs. Stowe. We wish she could have been present to witness that little episode. We recommend it to the respectful consideration of our Northern friends, whose tears are flowing freely for the sad and cruel treatment of Southern slaves.

We feel some scruple in alluding to a couple who stood in the shadow of the drapery in the drawing-room; for, on paper, courtships appear tedious; and yet a fashionable party here would fall flat unless a little of that sort of thing was going on.

During the evening the accomplished host, every now and then, with an admirable tact, contrived to attract the attention of any who seemed to have fallen aside out of observation.

Those who have attended similar entertainments in Washington unite in pronouncing the "*fête*" at Governor Aiken's as surpassing, in the number and distinction of its guests, in richness and elegance of dress, and in the sumptuous repast, any that has previously been given this winter.

XX.

SCENE IN THE HOUSE—A WINTER IN WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY, 1857.

AFTER a recess of some days, the House met this morning, and from the hours of twelve to seven presented a busy and extremely animated scene. Little pages of all sizes were running from one desk to another, fidgety and unquiet, gliding about like restless ghosts doomed to everlasting craving. After motion, some few of the members were carelessly lounging on well-stuffed arm-chairs, with limbs "*à la Trollope*," beguiling the time with daily papers, skimming the cream off the leading articles. Others were writing letters, appearing to take no sort of interest in any outward event, unless it was to start and give a negative when a vote was taken.

In the galleries the assortment of visitors was as miscellaneous as usual. Groups of gentlemen might be seen clustered around ladies, gayly conversing as they gracefully leaned over the balustrade; while behind the mosaic columns were others "*tête-a-tête*" in a quiet flirtation. Reader, there are secrets in the keeping of those cosy galleries, secrets which might incite the most flagging goose-quill to flowing sentences. If those dumb pillars could speak the language of tale-bearing, what a revealing there would be of the human heart in its softest and holi-

est phase, for those voiceless witnesses have listened to welcomes and farewells, have heard the tones of proud beauty subdued into the scarcely uttered breathings of tenderness, and the voice of haughty manhood grown tremulous with the accents of love!

We found much amusement in a party from Boston seated next to us. One of the number was diligently improving his sight by means of an opera-glass, with which he read the faces of distant members, and reported this one to be Mr. Burlingame, and that one Mr. —, all which particulars the ladies of the party seemed eagerly to drink in and lay to heart, nodding their assent like a tray of Mandarins on the head of an image boy. We stored one of their careful pieces of misrepresentation, for which we anticipate use some day.

In another direction might be seen a group of fair young girls, with symptoms of the nursery still clinging to their personal appearance, who were listening with the sweetest smiles to the whispered flatteries distilled into their ears. It was evidently their "first winter," which has much significance to all here.

The embarrassed "*member*," whose ambitious wife has dreamed for years that the "*first winter*" of her pretty daughter, if properly managed, would see her, at its close, the wife of a distinguished man, and who has consequently managed to sink in one short winter the savings of many years; the brilliant belle who returns to her home only to find it cold and

dreary, after the unnatural excitement of an admiration and attention which she never should have known,—these can understand the significance of these few words, "*A winter in Washington.*" The young girl, as well as the young member, learns in the homage of that first winter to overvalue her attractions, because the world stamps them with its livery; she learns to look on life as a mere showy pageant in which she is called upon to act a part, and to make that part striking and brilliant.

XXI.

DINNER PARTIES—CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION.

WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY, 1857.

DEAR reader, were you ever a guest at one of those intolerable dinner parties composed of prosy people in political life whom other people of established position are compelled to invite in Washington, because they have the misfortune to be in public life? Who shall attempt to enumerate the labors and anxieties of a mistress of a house where such dinners are given? These luxurious bouquets are pleasant things enough for the guests, who are merely required to take their seats, to supply their quota of conversation, to eat, to drink, to applaud; but little does the "diner-out" picture to himself the

amount of toil and care which the good things of which he so calmly partakes have involved upon the lady of the mansion.

This is public life here, in one of its many phases; yet where is the would-be public man who ever shrinks before the peril of such an undertaking?

A fashionable dinner party in Washington is indeed a grand military movement of black waiters; the elegant ladies and gentlemen being merely lay-figures upon which the African army exercise their skill. Though generally considered stupid, *we* have no reason to complain, for we always find plenty to interest and amuse us. It is a quiet enjoyment to see the trained machinery of hands and arms outstretched and active, placing and replacing; the unheard footsteps and moveless countenances, leading to the belief that we are waited upon by automatons only; that we have a certain conviction that such silent living creatures must of necessity be very observant, and we are even led to speculate upon what they will say when freed from restraint, and at perfect liberty in those unexplored basements where they congregate.

When the intervals between the course grow wearisome, we lean quietly back in our chair and begin counting how many wear caps, and peer phrenologically at heads, and catch odds and ends of opinions; and some one word sends us wondering far away from the well-bred festival, until our masculine "*vis*

à vis” turns the glory of his countenance upon us, and inquires if we are counting the variety of sweet-meats in the *epergne*.

We need not tell our readers that the present administration will soon close. It is familiar to the country that, in a few weeks, there is to be a change of public men.

In a few weeks a venerable man from a distant State will find himself suddenly elevated to the highest honors of Washington popularity, smothered by the sudden caress of every human being bearing the most distant consanguinity to the house of “Buchanan,” and overwhelmed by successive showers of visiting cards from all to whom he has ever been allied through the social link of a formal bow or courtesy.

Dear old man! sitting in his quiet study in Lancaster, in the innocence of his heart thinking no harm, not dreaming of what is impending over him! In a few weeks he will be besieged by visitors to a number positively bewildering. He will be exposed to the thorough-going and coarse perseverance of heterogeneous mobs, come merely to stare at the new “*President*,” or to pay neighborly calls, or to present petitions for office. He will be the recipient of compliments enough to raise a smile on a Fakir’s face.

And he must bear these honors meekly; he must smile with the blandness of a Howard under these

inflictions. He cannot, like "*Benvenuto Cellini*" in the "*Coliseum*," free himself from that "*monster*" known by the name of the "*people*." He is not even allowed to exercise the power of the "*Enchantress Queen*" in the "*Arabian Nights*." He cannot, like "*Her Majesty*," take a little water and throw it into the faces of each according to the necromantic formula.

Such resources are not allowed "*a public man*."

This is a part of the miseries of the in-coming President, which should be taken into proper consideration, and sympathized with as the case deserves. We are sure it will be consolatory to him to think that he has sympathy in the perplexing dilemmas of his position.

Dear, distant public, while the world is congratulating the successful candidate on having launched himself upon the dazzling sea which is the arena of so many hopes, he may soon feel, as the redoubtable hero Gulliver must have felt with the countless tiny threads of the Lilliputians entangling him in all directions, and may, ere many weeks elapse, mentally wish that he were "a little boy in the top of the elm-tree again."

All the male population is in a ferment, preparing for the "Inauguration Ball." The gentlemen have exhausted themselves in elegant conceits for the occasion. Indeed, the "Inauguration Ball" is the engrossing subject of discourse; many extravagant

suggestions have been hazarded, and many wild assertions made.

The session of Congress will soon close. The voices of those who have claims before that body are beginning to acquire a peevish inflexion. They begin to value time as a man who, in a trance, hears the nails knocking into his coffin, may be supposed to value life.

XXII.

RIGGS & CO.'S BANK.

WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY, 1857.

THE stranger visiting our city, when on his way to the Executive mansion, will observe on the corner of Fifteenth Street below President Square, a plain two-story building with a pointed roof,—a fine specimen of old-school architecture,—with a quaint air of respectability about its plainness. The house is stuccoed with a plain lead-color, and for years has not varied so much as the changing of the green blinds of the quaintly-shaped windows. This modest, unassuming structure, (how different from those gorgeous houses on Wall Street, which seem to have thriven, like parasite plants, out of the substance of others!) was originally a branch of the old United States Bank until the failure of that monster institution, when it became, and still continues, the pri-

vate banking house of our American Rothschilds, *Corcoran & Riggs*. The former head of the firm has recently retired, and it is now known as *Riggs & Co.*, a name familiar all over the globe.

The internal arrangements of this establishment are most perfect; nothing can surpass its order and regularity. Behind small screens fronting the entrance door, the busy clerks are engaged in the active transaction of business, and over the desks a full-orbed time-piece keeps watch over the quill-driving community below.

This house is supported by enormous capital in the private property of the leading members of the firm, and being connected with the great financial operations of the world, the suspension of other institutions are about as important to the well-established reputation of this, as the ripple of a midsummer sea to the stability of the Eddystone Lighthouse. When a reckless defaulter enters that tabernacle of money-changing, to account for a dishonored draft or explain away some just claim, the rigid justice of the spot insinuates, in iron whispers, that his visit is in vain.

In a small room hung with several choice paintings, and divided by a door only from the desks and buff-bound folios of the counting-room, may be found the leading members of the firm, the Napoleons of the numeration table, the Talleyrands of admiring stockbrokers and bewildered cashiers. In this consulting-room of financial science, this boudoir of mo-

neyed leisure, surrounded by iron safes and deed-chests, wars and rumors of wars are talked of, according to their influence on the money market, and an inundation deplored according to the attendant fall of consols. In this region of government securities and European bonds, the heads of the firm are the embodiment of power, the mightiest power of the present age, the power of money. Those figures which he multiplies on that cloth-covered table, involve the spring of an influence almighty in the world of traffic, and shake the commercial world with a speculative earthquake. It is a mighty power that sits in that cozy bank parlor; and here the petitioner is referred by the chief clerk to the heads of the house for the word which is to pronounce his bill dishonored, or inscribe his check with "*blank*."

Throughout the country this firm exercise all the influence arising from a character of the highest integrity, and maintain a high reputation in all their transactions. In all their business dealings the motives are clearly laid open; all is fair and above board; no masked apartment in that quaint old structure. The sun shines searchingly into the length and breadth of it. No property is put in peril by their speculations. No widow's substance is wasted by their transactions. No money is here lent on usurious interest; for these gentlemen are recognized as the proprietors of capacious hearts and purses, the strings of which are always open to the

encouragement of works of art, and to the liberal patronage of the struggling and impoverished author. They are, indeed, fine instances of what men of business should be, showing that the pursuit of wealth need not of necessity make men hard and narrow, that it may expand and invigorate all that is generous, and make a man the benefactor of those within the circle of his influence.

XXIII.

ENTERTAINMENT AT MRS. WATTERSTON'S.

WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY, 1857.

THE season of Lent has put a stop to the large dancing parties of our gay world, and we have substituted the more agreeable and more rational "social parties," which constitute one of the most pleasant features of "Washington Life." The most delightful of these reunions came off last evening at the residence of one of our oldest citizens, widow of the late George Watterston, a gentleman known in the literary world as the author of "Glencairn" and "Lives of American Statesmen." His daughter, one of the most cultivated and intellectual ornaments of society here, is an invalid, and it was to enliven the retirement to which impaired health had

condemned her, that a select company of our resident citizens were invited.

As we entered the drawing-rooms of Mrs. W., where some twenty choice spirits had already assembled, the first thing that struck us was the elevated tone of conversation, so distinct from the usual colloquial flippancy, so different from what one hears at Washington routs and assemblies. There was cast over all the speaking words, the originality and refinement of intellect; not the usual small-talk, but talk variegated by sprays of wit, and seasoned by peculiarities of language.

As our eye glanced around, it was arrested by a figure of middle size, with a noble phrenological development, and face after the most improved Lavater shape. There was a repose in his manner which seemed to infuse into everything about him something serene and refining. This person's soul, dear reader, has an inner temple, a veiled chamber, to which the world is not admitted. To him is given the talisman to unlock the portals of nature and read truths unseen by common natures. He peeps into the hearts of the young flowers, and sips daintily the sweets which dwell on their fresh lips. When he feels the enfolding clasp of the angel within, a thousand harps are tuned, and at every touch comes a rich gush of melody.

The works of this poet (Rufus Dawes) are already

exalted to the same shelf with those of Buchanan Read, Percival, and Dana.

Glancing in another direction, we saw the *poetry of form*, represented in the person of a distinguished sculptor of our city,—a man of trembling sensibility, with a genius almost feminine in its delicacy. His exquisite busts of Benton and Chief-Justice Taney are said, by connoisseurs, to combine the delicacy of Powers and the elaborate and finished execution of Greenough. The beauty of these works of art has led Congress, at its last session, to commission this gentleman (Dr. Stone) to cut in marble a statue of John Hancock, for the east wing of the Capitol. The poetical contour of his head, and sensitive quiver of his features in conversation, indicate the man of genius.

Near this gentleman stands one who spends his life sitting in critical judgment upon governments, dynasties, presidents, and cabinets. Distinguished statesmen incline their heads reverentially when they hear mention of his name. He is known to be an unsparing hater of intrigue, a sworn enemy to political imposture; he unmasks corruption, pokes his pen into every description of abuse, promotes every species of inquiry, and carves governmental measures into mince-meat. This gentleman (Mr. Kingman) is known throughout the country as the Napoleon of correspondents, the Talleyrand of admiring editors and bewildered politicians.

Mingling familiarly with the company was a silvery head, and a face with such a spiritual expression, that it reminded us of a pictured Raphael. His voice, too, comported with the mild moonlight of his appearance; he talked so easily and elegantly, with such earnest quiet of manner, that we almost wished him to talk on forever. This interesting person is an artist of our city, and son of the lamented Judge Cranch of the District Court.

Among the ladies present was a brilliant brunette from Georgia, with teeth like pearls, and dark eyes, in whose depths the fervid sun of the South appeared to have left a portion of its radiance.

The daughter of our former "Indian Commissioner," the universally-esteemed Mr. Luke Lea, was there, in a dress of white crape, a sprig or two of glossy-leaved, red-berried holly fastened in her hair; it was indeed

"A sure cure for sad eyes
To gaze upon her face."

Vivacity and repose seem united in this fair girl's nature, as the lively tinting of some delicate blossom is mingled with the dreamy influence of its rich perfume.

The daughter of one of the leading members of the "Washington Bar," Mr. Fendall, was there; a versatile and brilliant belle, who is a privileged "wit" in society here, expected to say what nobody

else can say. Her face is full of a hundred laughing fancies, and a certain careless ease of expression denotes that she is not afraid of her own voice, and never hesitates to laugh or retort when the impulse is upon her.

About eleven o'clock we were summoned to an exquisitely-arranged supper-room, delicate viands, and wines of the best brands and flavor. Twelve o'clock arrived before we scarcely thought it an hour; indeed, the whole evening appeared only an hour,—a dear, delightful, dreamy, midsummer hour.

XXIV.

FOURTH OF MARCH—INAUGURAL OF MR. BUCHANAN.

WASHINGTON, MARCH, 1857.

THE morning of the 4th of March opened with a bright sunshine, so bright that the air felt almost like summer. Everything seemed to smile a welcome to the venerable man who was, on this day, to take the high place he is to fill among us.

The sun made a bright path for him; in the broad, public grounds the fresh turf diffused its tribute of welcome; little-winged people wet their wings and sang with bursts of gladness; brooks frolicked and jostled their tiny drops together, and leaped and sparkled a gay welcome; sprouting leaves seemed to

deepen their delicate, emerald tint, and rustle and kiss each other lovingly for joy; even the violets shook off their winter slumbers and opened their bright eyes to greet him. Every ripple, every breeze, and every sweet, feathered thing, seemed to rejoice in the coming event.

Our city also exhibited signs of joyful preparation. No one seemed to betake himself to his customary employment. In the public buildings was not heard the accustomed hum and bustle of business. The closed doors, the silence around, attested the absence of the employees. The streets were early filled with government clerks, standing in groups, talking merrily to each other on what appeared to be a subject of joyous import. The juvenile population seemed also astir at an unusual hour. At almost every turn might be seen fresh nursery maids, and playful children, dancing and prattling and clapping their tiny hands, as if in expectation of some coming event of joyful excitement. Servants and runners at the hotels wore an unusual air, walking to and fro, or sitting with limbs carelessly crossed, as if detained out of doors in expectation of some coming circumstance.

By nine o'clock all Washington was alive. Trains of cars poured rapidly in, filled with strangers from different cities. Crowds suddenly, and as if by magic, appeared emerging from every corner, and Pennsylvania Avenue was soon filled with well-dressed pedes-

trians on the look-out for the procession. From the "White House" to the Capitol, windows, balconies, and roofs were thronged. At private windows stood lovely women with wreaths and bouquets of flowers, while from the public buildings, from the turrets of the Capitol, floated flags, as for a victory.

Washington opened thus her arms to receive the man whose election had been a triumph over Northern fanaticism.

About twelve o'clock the discharge of cannon announced the "move" of the procession. Aristocratic equipages, with diplomats and officers in uniform, or beautiful women, on their way to the "east wing," in advance of the cavalcade, passed rapidly along. Detachments of the police were active in regulating the movements of the crowd of pedestrians in waiting, whom it was difficult to keep within due bounds. At length the music became audible in the distance, increasing, until vehement shouts and cheers announced that it was near at hand. As soon as the cheers of the people—louder almost than the artillery which signalized the first movements of the procession—was heard, all strained their eyes "at the advancing pageant." The nodding mass of gorgeous uniforms was most imposing, when viewed advancing from a distance, with the heads of the cheering multitude intervening.

First came the six Marshals in rich badges of orange-colored silk; then came the "Flying Artil-

lery," from Fort McHenry, drawn by some sixty horses. At a little interval from these followed whole squares of military, their arms polished like mirrors, their march regular and their mien erect, looking neither to the right nor to the left. The cheerful looks of these gallant bands appeared to sympathize with the occasion; while their mien betrayed the discipline and harmony of men who had served an apprenticeship to arms.

Following these, drawn by two splendid grays, came an open carriage; the horses were of the rarest breed, their beautiful limbs seeming to disdain the ground, and yet, at the slight touch of the driver, they paused, motionless, as if suddenly transformed into stone. As this vehicle passed on, the sound of the music was drowned by cheers that seemed to shake our city to its centre. Superb flowers fell in and around this equipage; handkerchiefs and banners waved from every window, and, amidst flashing uniforms and exulting music, such as might have hailed an emperor, the President elect of a nation of freemen passed along. It was impossible not to discern, in the acclamations of the people, an enthusiasm ardent and genuine, which it would be impossible to counterfeit. The prancing of the horses, the dazzle of the uniforms, and the tossing to and fro of the standards, presented one of the gayest and most brilliant spectacles.

Within an hour the vast crowd was at the Capitol

gates, marshaled in long lines on either side, leaving a broad space in the centre, awaiting the order of their leader to enter. The music struck up a louder and gladder strain as the appointed marshals made way with difficulty for the more distinguished to enter within the gates first; and such was the rush and press to obtain admittance, that scarcely had these entered ere the crowd poured headlong in, and took their way to the east front of the Capitol, which was to be the scene of the inauguration.

On a platform erected over the steps of the east wing, but high enough to be in sight of all, was placed a table, on which, clear and prominent, was a copy of the Holy Bible. Around the table were the high officers of the country, and seated around were all the marked personages of our city. The nodding of plumes and the glitter of jewels presented a scene that none could behold without a sparkling eye and swelling heart.

The space below the platform had been crowded for several hours previous to the arrival of the President elect, by such persons as were not entitled to appointed and special seats. As the crowd poured in there was a struggle to gain access to this one particular spot. While they were pushing and scrambling, the hubbub suddenly ceased, as a commanding figure, with slow and majestic steps, came to the front of the platform. His whole appearance was on a noble scale; he seemed formed for prominence,

and to his conspicuous position was as well proportioned as a cedar-tree to Mount Lebanon, a "grand seigneur" to the manor born. His head was bare, and, as he looked steadfastly around, the high and thoughtful gravity of his majestic countenance hushed the impatient crowd. There was a second of intense quiet, then cheer after cheer rent the air.

Never was there a more striking subject for the painter-genius than the scene exhibited. The tall, erect figure of the President elect, dressed, with his habitual precision, in a suit of black, towering above the crowding throng of his applauding countrymen. Above his head the sweeping arches of the Capitol rose grand and high; the bright sun casting the whole edifice into the strongest relief of light and shade, while far in the back-ground rose that marble ant-hill, destined, we fear, like the Cathedral of Cologne, and the Palace of the Louvre, to be immortal in incompleteness. Dim in the distance rose the spires and roofs of our city, while below, bathed in sunlight, lay the Capitol grounds in all their beauty. Around stately groups of sculpture looked mutely from their pedestals. Before him rose the statue of Washington, in all its marble majesty,—the uplifted arm seeming unconsciously to point, with greater significance, above. Greenough's noble group, with its stony figures, rose one above the other, while the haughty brow of the God of War, and the still

form of the Goddess of Peace, looked from their niches upon the imposing scene.

A sensation of solemnity seemed to elevate the speaker as his eye rested on the sea of faces before him.

Although but a short distance from where he stood, we could only hear the faint sound of his voice as he commenced his Inaugural; we could only perceive the effect created upon all, as a cheer, more earnest, more prolonged than the first, betokened the close of his speech.

After a minute's pause the crowd broke in all directions, and poured down the avenue in various knots and groups, each testifying the strong impression made upon the multitude by the address.

XXV.

TRIP TO NEW YORK.

WASHINGTON, MARCH, 1857.

WE have had adventures by "land and sea" since our last, and, for want of an audience, we are again beguiled into the weakness of print.

We accepted an invitation from a party of friends, and accompanied them on a visit to New York, and now, on our return, we purpose giving you some account of our trip, impressions, etc.

After partaking of an early breakfast, on the morning of March 19, we reached the Washington Depot, amid the excitement, noise, and confusion which always attend the arrival and departure of a train of cars. Our party preferred securing an early seat to a lengthened sitting in the ladies' apartment, and we had, from the car window, an edifying view of the interior of a "Railroad depot."

There was one great building, with huge, open doors, the hospital for sick engines; and we could see the metallic patients in all sorts of uncomfortable postures, while the medical gentlemen employed banged them with hammers and screws unflinchingly in their vital parts. Other engines were advancing and retreating, running from one line of rail to another, never apparently at peace, always fidgety and unquiet, gliding and sliding about like restless ghosts doomed to everlasting craving after motion.

As six o'clock the bell gave the final signal; there was a heavy panting, a shrill shriek, a slight movement, accompanied by an under-current of motion which seemed as though the pulses of the mighty machine were throbbing with impatience; a few parting injunctions pealed out from iron lungs,—and a plunge into the open air.

The first few miles were got over in silence. Some of the passengers, with tickets in their hats, had plunged into the scenery and adventures of pamphlet novels, and were keeping company with dukes and earls.

Others beguiled the tedium of the way with daily papers, skimming the cream off the leading articles, seeming greatly interested in the report of a Woman's Rights Convention, two columns and a half long. In this dreary subject the pursuers took great interest, though we observed one of the maculines (hard-hearted creature!) fold his paper, with a muttered remark "that women had too many rights already."

About four o'clock we reached the city of "Brotherly Love," (love like that of the first brothers, we have heard it insinuated,) where we designed remaining for the night, a portion of our party not being equal to the fatigue of the entire route through.

We will not attempt to describe the scene of confusion when we arrived at the Philadelphia depot, where our party were beset on all sides by hackmen. One shouted out to us to go to the "United States," another screamed the name of the "Girard House," while a third roared for us to pass on. From the moment this baggage war commences, the lady traveler, deafened and confounded, may draw back into her shell like an affrighted snail, the depot, until that matter is settled, being no place for a lady.

We found the "Girard House" fully sustained its reputation as a first-class hotel. Everything conducted on the best principle. The slightest touch of a bell brought precisely the servant that was wanted. If the "slaves of the lamp" had known

what they were about, such arrangements would have imparted greater charm to Aladdin's Magic Palace than windows of ruby or crowns of topaz.

XXVI.

ON THE DELAWARE—ARRIVAL AT NEW YORK.

WASHINGTON, MARCH, 1857.

HAVING decided to go by water to New York, we stepped on board one of the fine boats of the New York line, about nine o'clock, on the morning after our arrival at Philadelphia. When the bustle and confusion incidental to the stowing away of freight and baggage had subsided, the plank was drawn in, and we very soon cleared the shipping in the harbor, with its bewildering perplexity of sound and movement. Though many have steamed up and down the Delaware, times without number, few have seen the river. Some have always steamed it in their sleep; some have plunged at once into the cabin, to avoid the passengers on deck; some have escaped the vision by the clouds of a cigar; some by a novel and a dinner. But few can recollect anything more of it than that it flows through banks more or less miry, and that it is, to the best of their recollection, something longer than the Chesapeake Canal.

There were few passengers, and the weather being

lovely for the season, we could enjoy the view from the deck without personal inconvenience.

Among the passengers was a gentleman who seemed mad with love and despair. He had evidently been spurred into frantic activity by recent rejection. For hours during the day he paraded the deck, whistling "Love Not" in divers keys, and with so many variations, that more than one of our party devoutly wished him overboard. As night came on, he swallowed a tremendous glass of Cognac, and disappeared below. Very much to be pitied were the ladies whose state-rooms were not very remote from this gentleman. Snatches of song—rhapsodies to which those of Nat Lee would sound tame and prosaic—were distinctly audible from his berth the live-long night. The Bay, which was in a state of unusual calm, was probably overawed by the storm raging in the breast of this unhappy Romeo. But these moral typhoons are seldom of long duration, and we doubt not, ere this, the individual referred to is as placid and docile as any domestic animal.

Long after midnight we fell asleep, lulled by the measured tread of the watch directly over us, the moaning of the wind, and the gurgling and surging of the water as the boat plowed through it. The early sunshine of the following morning showed us the flat river banks from our state-room window, and, hurrying on deck, the scene that presented itself, as

we approached New York, almost baffles description. We passed mighty docks filled with fleets, buildings worthy of Babylon, and echoing with the sounds of hammers, cranes, forges, and enginery. And then the life and bustle that pervaded the scene! In one direction, groups of chatting seamen were singing boisterous negro songs from a ship just entering; coopers were hammering at casks, ropes splashing in the water, captains shouting their orders through their hands, and empty casks rolling along with a hollow, drum-like sound.

Upon the wharf at which we at length stopped, what a rush of life; what a rattle of wagons; what a surge of population; what a chaos of clamor; what rushing of porters, and trundling of trunks; what solicitation to trust ourselves for instant conveyance to the remotest hotel in the city! In a feeling little short of desperation, our party flung themselves into the first hack they could reach, and, to our genuine self-congratulation, found that we were under no compulsion to be carried beyond the — Hotel. Once anchored down, we were soon ushered into an elegantly-furnished room, where a bright fire blazed in the highly-polished grate; crimson curtains cast a ruddy and genial glow upon a tapestry carpet and upon the table. The coffee-urn was bubbling and steaming, while ample high-backed well-stuffed chairs stood near, and the "*Times*" opened its extremest dimensions upon a centre table.

XXVII.

NEW YORK HOTEL—VISIT TO BALL AND BLACK'S JEWELRY
ESTABLISHMENT.

WASHINGTON, APRIL, 1857.

ABOUT four o'clock on the day of our arrival dinner was announced, and we retreated from the window, where we had been watching the hurry and bustle of life without, to a table, the peculiarities of which might have rendered it the theme of quarterly essayists. We felt as if we had been taken to a *restaurant*, where people eat their ragout with a spoon, and attempt to render the miraculous draught of fishes digestible by miraculous draughts of patent medicines under the name of fish sauces. The bill of fare positively required one's throat to be macadamized. Nothing but a salamander could be nourished without excruciation upon the series of currie, Cayenne, and spices. For ourselves, we adhered to the sirloin in preference to the dainty bits of varnished leather, *à la this*, and *à la that*, successively brought round by the waiters.

Half the Stock Exchange seemed seated at the table; moneyed men from Pearl Street, stockbrokers from the Exchange, and spare bankers from Wall Street, most of them exhibiting the complexion of an apple in the receiver of an exhausted air-pump. These enfranchised men of business could talk of nothing but capital.

There was a millionaire among them who seemed, with the servants, to be a regal personage. They quoted his sayings, and when he said nothing, wondered what he thought. As he ran on, we involuntarily glanced toward a silver claret pitcher, wishing, for once, that its capacity did not prevent us ascertaining to what amount the disappearance of the fragrant "*Chateau Latour*" that glowed within accounted for the fluency of its owner.

In the drawing-room, whither we adjourned, the study of the various groups was deeply interesting to us. One dear old gentleman, in a half-reclining position on a French lounge, was enduring the agonies of the annual influenza, inevitable in New York, owing to the east winds, and yet paying compliments to a sweet girl by his side between the pauses of his ipecacuanha lozenges.

There was a group, surrounding a circular table, who had traversed France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy; visited cathedrals, galleries, mountains, and water-falls, operas, grottoes, and Houses of Assembly; learned to distinguish one popular singer from another, and to call the *premieres danseuses* of the three great capitals by their correct names; purchased rare pictures, and several busts and statues. We soon learned from their conversation that they were novelties just then fresh from the Carnival, bright from a regeneration at Paris.

While in New York, we visited Ball & Black's

famous jewelry establishment. We passed down Broadway, with its bustle of exhibition rooms and auction offices; its motley array of lounging dandies; its omnibuses; its coal carts, wagons, drays; its impatient throngs; its intrusive beggars, thrusting themselves forward like highwaymen to arrest the pedestrian; its wealth of luxury in shop windows; its gorgeous jewels, glittering time-pieces, brilliant glass, noble engravings, costly furniture. As we pushed our way down this vast thoroughfare, nothing affected us more, nothing struck a deeper and tenderer chord in our bosom, than the number and deplorable aspect of the little beggar children who seemed to present themselves at every step of our way. Here in this heart of refinement and prosperity we were met at every step by little outcasts, their features wasted by want and privation, their limbs pinched with hunger, and blue with cold, and their faces looking as though unvisited for weeks by smiles or ablutions.

There was one little girl with such a sweet, sad expression, that we involuntarily stopped and spoke to her. She answered our questions very clearly, but the heavy, sad look never left her eyes a moment. We recall even now the quiver of that child's thin white lips as she told her simple story.

"*Abolitionists*" of New York! you whose sympathies with the wide colored humanities are so fresh and clear; who cherish such pitiless, unrelenting

scorn of the slaveholder ; whose charity is so broad, deep, universal for liberty, human rights, and universal brotherhood,—there is no *slavery* on the wide surface of our country can be found comparable to that which we have seen within the area of a mile around your dwellings ! Do you think that when these children came into the world, there was no milk in mothers' breasts for them, no Divine solicitude about them, no tenderness in the heart of Christ, that you suffer them to cuddle in rags and shiver on your sidewalks, often kicked and cuffed by the passer-by ? Arrest the fearful amount of *young* life which is running to waste in your city, cast aside and overlooked ; ameliorate the condition of the suffering children of your city, ere you proffer sympathy and aid to those who need it not.

XXVIII.

PARTY AT AN UP-TOWN FASHIONABLE'S.

WASHINGTON, APRIL, 1857.

OUR party were invited, while in New York, to an evening party of one of the “up-town” fashionables.

The ascent of stone steps, — their balustrade guarded by sculptured animals,—the lofty entrance, and the tall footmen who admitted us, gave the sense

of entering a palace. In the hall a vista of marble pillars and statues opened before us, and the air was fragrant with the rare flowers adorning the flower-stands.

There was a charming queen of New York fashion, dressed after the plate of the *Journal des Modes*, who kindly pointed out to us the most conspicuous persons present.

There was one foreign-looking individual; he was introduced to us as a "*French Vicomte*," who, small as he was, had been fractured by the reverberation of the *coup d'état*, and who evidently fancied that he had achieved a position for life as its victim. He had dabbled in press intrigues, and as Louis Napoleon did not choose to be conspired against without returning it, he was now, like his friend Hugo, "eating the bitter bread of banishment." It served to beguile the evening to listen to the marvelous histories related by this diamond edition of a conspiracy. Many of his adventures were as wild as if invented by Hoffman, and might put to blush the wildest imaginings of "Kid" or "Paul Jones."

His only consolation seemed to be that the present state of France could not continue, (when did a banished intrigant say otherwise?) and the restoration to honor and influence of himself and his friends would once more restore in France the balance of power.

He had very recently arrived in New York from

the *Isle of Wight*, and evidently expects to become a great lion, under the pilotage of New York "lion-hunters." But even in this city of *wonder-mongers* the exiled patriot market has been long overstocked. Let a Brutus make his appearance, with his estates ever so confiscated, or his papers ever so burned, he would have little chance of picking up a livelihood in this centre of civilization.

In the beginning of the evening our curiosity was excited by the *entrée* of a gentleman who was greeted with the enthusiasm due to a victor returning from Marathon. This individual, we learned, was the model man of Wall Street, distinguished for the magnitude and consistency of his subscriptions to all public charities and institutions. Stockbrokers respectfully nodded as he glanced their way; and gray-headed men stood aside with reverence for the passage of the promoter of half the charitable institutions of the metropolis.

The boyhood of this gentleman had been none of the easiest, for he had commenced life without a dollar. He had never laid his head on a pillow of down, poor boy! nor had a softer covering than a heavy patch-work quilt, stuffed with cotton; indeed, we learned that even the quilt was sometimes lacking, and that he might have rolled up his day-wearables to rest his head upon.

How did he amass his millions? By able speculation with the fortunes of others; by the risk of

what was not his own, and what, if lost, he would have been unable to replace. A blunder might have involved hundreds of families in ruin.

This gentleman cultivates, in his country-seat hot-houses, a variety of tropical fruits which are grown nowhere else in America. It is said his fruit-stands are of gold. During the evening he inflicted his green-house and forcing-houses upon us like a prize fruit-grower.

One of the guests was a source of some amusement to us; one, we should think, engaged to supply the small-talk of parties, as a confectioner is engaged to furnish bon-bons for refreshment. He seemed to adapt himself to every one, talking a sort of sensible scandal with a superior air of regret.

XXIX.

DINNER PARTY.

WASHINGTON, APRIL, 1857.

NOTHING is more stupid than to imagine that in New York a man may be foreseen by means of his calling, like a porter by his ticket, or a cabman by his badge. We had been invited to a "dinner party" during our stay in that city, and had understood that a canonical guest of distinction in the religious world would be present. We had expected to hear an impressive grace from this dignitary of the church, but

were disappointed, for as long as the soup was on the table we were left in admiration of his empty chair.

We kept constantly snatching glances toward the door, in the expectation of seeing a calm, grave shadow glide into the room. Our readers will consequently appreciate our amazement, when, just as the silver cover was lifted from the salmon, a burly step was heard in the hall, drowned as it entered the room, by the stentorian volume of voice that cried, as if doing justice to a halloo—"Beg pardon, ladies; beg pardon, my dear Mrs. ——. My bureau and I have been tumbling each other upside down for the last hour, to find a cravat not too starched for this occasion!" After bowing slightly to us in return for the introduction intruded upon us at that inopportune moment by our host, he observed,—“The French prefer caper sauce with salmon, but within safe distance of the sea, nothing like a fresh lobster!”—as though we had spent previous years together, discussing the mysteries of the stove and saucepan.

“Madeira,” said he, when the waiter offered him Sherry or Champagne. And a few minutes afterwards, having seized the occasion to examine this jolly *bon-vivant*, we could not help thinking that the white cravat had much more of the butler out of place, or commodore on the retired list, than of the divine.

As the Madeira warmed him into conversation, he talked racily of stocks and sturdily of railway bonds, and finally discussed with his host the death of one of his wealthy members, a Fifth Avenue millionaire, who had departed this life on the preceding day. The amount of his property, the sum left to certain metropolitan charities, was coolly and methodically detailed. The sorrows of the bereaved family seemed to awaken no thought in this discussion. Not one word of sympathy for the aching hearts which were throbbing with anguish under a heavy bereavement. Not one thought for those who kneel beside the dead in heartfelt grief. He had died *rich*, and in this vortex of money-getting, the deceased man's *property* was the one thing thought of.

The dinner was luxurious; the table groaned, and the heated attendants hustled each other in their anxiety to be everywhere at once, and to do everything for everybody at the same time. On adjourning to the drawing-rooms the company divided in groups. Some collected around the fine-toned piano, and appeared to enjoy the music afforded them by the young ladies of the party. The elder ladies sat together in a group, and conversed on such sage affairs as their household cares afforded, and it would have amused, or perhaps enlightened a more youthful listener, to hear the excellent maxims for managing refractory children and servants, which emanated from this wise jury of matrons. Their lords eschew-

ing music, discussed the prices of the stock-market, the last news from Europe, and such kindred topics, until coffee was brought in. After swallowing the strong black liquid, which was offered in diminutive porcelain cups, a visit to the conservatory and gallery attached to the house was proposed. A short walk brought us to a large conservatory, built on a light and beautiful model, and occupying a distant wing of the house; and on this bright day the doors were opened wide to display the wealth of flowers within.

We pushed from this abode of Flora through an arched door into a room, the walls of which were filled with book-cases of dark wood, quaintly carved. The chairs and library table were of walnut, elaborately carved. The windows of ruby-colored glass cast a brilliant glow, and assisted in giving a mellowed tint to rare paintings and exquisite sculpture.

XXX.

VISIT TO A NEW YORK COUNTRY-SEAT.

WASHINGTON, APRIL, 1857.

WE devoted one morning of our stay in New York to a drive in the environs of the city. The hackman stirred his horse with a chirrup and a touch of the lash; and we left the hotel to travel miles, it

seemed, through those streets. A long array of shops and warehouses; a stream of vehicles, beside our own, in the centre of the way; now and then a break into some wider space, a square, or junction of streets; here and there a great public building, or an old house, which we felt sure must be something notable, if anybody were by to point it out. Interested and curious at first, we became quite stunned and dizzy with a strong suspicion that we had been singled out for a mysterious destiny, and that the hack-driver had some desperate intention of maddening his passengers by driving them round and round in a circle through these bewildering streets.

Nothing but the jolting din of our vehicle, the jar over stones, and houses gliding past us, gave evidence of progress. As we approached the more aristocratic quarter of the city, carriages were rushing about in all directions. At one great mansion, with a portico supported by Corinthian columns, and guarded on either hand by a lion *couchant*, carved in stone, there was a jumble of vehicles, and a temporary stoppage of ours. The door was open, servants in livery were seen in the hall, and a dashing equipage was just setting down its freight. The high-blooded grays pranced and pawed for a moment, evincing symptoms of displeasure at finding themselves disturbed by hackney coaches, brewers' drays, and other unaristocratic vehicles, strange in shape, and alarming in sound to their high mettle.

As we approached our destination, the courtly-like expanse of *up-town* was gradually left behind, the handsome dwellings becoming fewer, until they disappeared altogether. The aspect of the scenes into which we now emerged presented a striking contrast to those we had left. We passed through dull streets, whose only visible population were myriads of children, now chastising a hopeless live kitten, as it twisted out of the strings which harnessed it to a cart of stones; here playing at school on a soiled door-step, and illustrating the theory of education by the most merciless castigation, the dealing out of which seemed the great business of the scene; there arranging a banquet of sand pies, with orange-peel for the *entrées* and taffy for the *entremets*. On one of the door-steps a family group were seated, their heads in one another's laps, busily engaged in performing for each other those kind offices, the nature of which we must leave to the imagination of the reader.

We soon, however, left this uninteresting neighborhood for rich landscapes and stately country-seats—country-seats such as McGuire would delight to describe in his largest capitals and most sonorous periods, were they to fall at any moment under his hammer. The stately models of aristocratic residences seemed built in order to gratify the taste of those who care less whether Lazarus be sitting famished and suffering at their gates, than that the

gates should be of sufficient solidity to exclude the spectacle of so piteous an object.

The Wall Street banker glories in making it *almost* as agreeable to his guests as a mansion in Fifth Avenue, by bringing up daily from the city the freshest fish and city gossip, the last new books and engravings, periodicals, and caricatures. The hard-working entertainer of a fashionable country-seat party exercises his laborious ingenuity that nothing may be wanting in *his* country-house, which his friend might have enjoyed better in town.

There was one among the number we passed which particularly attracted our attention. Trees clustered in groups around it, but were so arranged as not to conceal the pillared front. It was said to be the property of the "*business lawyer*" of a Wall Street banking house. The constituents of the banker progressed into the clients of the lawyer; the latter being the obedient humble servant of the former. Though these great bankers maintain unblemished reputations as *rigidly* upright men, punctual, methodical; though their names are always found inscribed on subscription lists, yet they are often obliged to insist upon the prosecution of petty delinquencies; often compelled to borrow the strong arm of the law to crush those poor defaulters called *needy people*.

Reader, as our eye took in these gorgeous piles, we involuntarily thought of the persecutions, prose-

cutions, and incarcerations which constitute the killing and wounding of financial battles. How was this princely wealth accumulated? Was no widow's property periled? Was no orphan's substance wasted? Was no money lent on usurious interest? It is a fearful thing to raise a pile of worldly possessions upon orphans' rights! It is a horrible thing to turn from the world and bear not away the passport of a mourner's tear! Oh, can the graves of these money-getting business men ever be watered by the dews distilled from warm human hearts? Can they, in that last, fearful hour, buy with their wealth a single love, a softened hand to soothe with such a touch as love only knows, their throbbing temples?

XXXI.

EVENING AT A NEW YORK CONVERSAZIONE.

WASHINGTON, APRIL, 1857.

WE were invited, while in New York, to pass an evening at the "*Conversazione*" of Mrs. —, who, it is said, has taken out a patent for getting proofs of everything and everybody.

Though enjoying the friendship of many of the most eminent men of the day, yet this lady seems really to regard the enlistment in her circle of those choice spirits, precisely in the same light as she would

regard the acquisition of a costly piece of furniture. We were forewarned that she was a person enthroned by authority of the elective monarchy, called the "*world of letters*," and we accordingly entered her drawing-rooms with an air of modest depreciation. The only persons present to witness our entrance were two very ancient specimens of history who sat engulfed in two of the roomiest "*fauteuils*," and whom, too new to New York life to recognize as the oldest poet and most venerable historian, we conceived to be family connections, for nothing but prospects of inheritance, we fancied, could have recommended those silvery heads to the favor of the beautiful and fashionable Mrs. —, forgetting that persons of extraordinary celebrity cannot be boys.

Long before the party was completed by the arrival of some twenty additional guests—the number to which Mrs. — limited her *soirées*—we began to feel that we were there to be as severely scrutinized as is usually the case where a youthful pretender is paraded in presence of the conscript fathers. "We find we must be all ear," was our judicious preparation for the ordeal. "Far safer to be voted heavy than flippant." And by studiously concealing the few observations we hazarded, with a note of interrogation, and listening with an air of respectful edification to milk-and-water commonplaces that would scarcely pass current in the dullest periodical going, we contrived in the course of an hour to vanquish

the mistrust of the critical synod. Those who came prepared to talk down the "Southern stranger," relented. The moment they saw us disposed to adopt their opinions, we were allowed to have one of our own. The first we were induced to form under these extenuating circumstances was, that the charm of Mrs. ——'s *soirée* was somewhat overrated. For though the wit of the aged poet and venerable politician were as racy in their way as wine of comet growth, we could not help feeling that both were the high priests of an exploded creed.

As the evening advanced, we gave ourselves up to the study of the large collection of celebrities before us. Among the guests were learned pundits, who, like Cuvier, can describe and reconstruct even the minutest articulation of the heart; and "conversation men," who put down their puns and witticisms for "soirée" consumption, as East India purveyors preserve fowls and sirloins of beef in the Strand, to be eaten fresh at Hong-Kong; and lounging artists, prepared to take off a photographic *fac-simile* of the company, to be circulated in *Leslie's Illustrated Paper*. There was also a meteoric city editor, who had Greek and Roman history by heart, and a tendency to verse-making at the nib of his pen. There were lady-rhyming young men; and a curiosity-monger, who seized upon several of the company to exhibit some of his best autographs—one from the great Linnæus, inclosing a rare specimen of the Ice-

landic flea, and another from the renowned Humboldt, of which the ink was so pale that you could not decipher a syllable, except by chemical process.

There was a prim little woman, who seemed to command great deference, and, unaccustomed to find so much authority conceded to the weaker vessel, we decided that some very great personage was before us. The deference with which every lady made way for her approach, led us to mentally set her down as a Mrs. Stowe or Miss Dix.

Before the evening closed, we learned that this important individual's husband had been a painstaking *savant* who, by the discovery of some very small planet, had made his way into a professor's chair. By means of these filaments, which pretenders to scientific distinction manage to put forth in foreign countries, the discoverer of what no one cared about, now it was discovered, had contrived to affix to his name the initials of certain continental orders almost as unknown to fame as the planet or gas he had dragged forth from obscurity. Still, however, his ambitious relict seemed to sun herself in his glory, and on the strength of a monument where her husband's honors were enumerated, she invariably qualified herself as the widow of the "late celebrated."

Had Sir Isaac Newton left a widow, she could not be more primly self-conscious; and as the world is easily imposed upon by gravity of mien, the learned men-artists, a set with whom herself or the "late

celebrated" had scraped acquaintance, really fancied the defunct planet-seeker a great philosopher, and his widow a component part of the world of science. For ourselves, we found the study of the Spring fashions on the person of our elegant hostess, a pleasanter pastime than hazarding an attack of ophthalmia, by fixing our eyes on the glaring costume of the widow of the "late celebrated," which was so gorgeous, that, like *Pean d'Ani* in her sun-beam gown, she all but blinded us.

On being introduced, she relaxed somewhat from her almost Spanish dignity of reserve; but on learning that we were from the South, she reassumed her imperial dignity. We assumed our sweetest smiles to thaw the ice of her dignity, and draw her into conversation. But we might as well have ventured to quote Turkish verses with a Sultan.

There was also the portly relict of a "celebrated divine;" a volume of occasional sermons bearing his name being asked for once in five years or so at the book-stores. This lady's volubility presented an amusing contrast to the frigid manners of the widow of the "late celebrated."

"Tell us," she said, in the most mysterious manner, a moment after our introduction, "*which* is the great man. Everybody, I find, is in the secret, though he goes about in plain clothes, and would not dine with Bishop ——, lest he should be suspected.

This is the first party he has been to ; Mrs. —— be-spoke him before he arrived."

We gathered from these fragmentary sentences, that this wonder-monger had been made the subject of a hoax. Some one as flighty as herself had persuaded her that the lion of Mrs. ——'s *soirée* was a spy of the Sultan's, who had been dispatched to America on a secret mission ; and scarcely a gentleman present whose face happened to be strange to her, and of sufficiently mahogany complexion to avouch an oriental origin, but was exposed to the annoyance of her scrutiny. At length, having fixed upon a male member of our party, sufficiently dun of visage to warrant the supposition, she hurried to us to communicate the discovery she had made, and we were not a little amused to hear the embellishments which the second edition of the story received.

"What an interesting creature he is!" she said, pointing to our unconscious friend ; "the Pope had such confidence in him that he was dispatched by his order to Constantinople as a missionary, where, instead of converting others, he became converted in his turn ; but, from his origin, he was so much an object of suspicion among the Turks, that his only chance of securing his neck was by becoming the spy of the seraglio. Turkey possesses a *diplomatie accrédité*, and he has been secretly dispatched to America."

We could scarcely refrain from complimenting the lady on her genius for amplification.

Such, dear reader, was our experience of a New York *soirée*. The really eminent persons present commanded our respect, though we wondered a little what could have brought them to converse together, when they might have confabulated so much more pleasantly at home.

XXXII.

OUR BIRTH-PLACE—WALK ON THE BRANDYWINE.

WASHINGTON, APRIL, 1857.

WE were determined, on our way home, to rest for one day, at least, at the place "where we were born," and which we had only left for our present home some four years since.

When we stopped, midway between Baltimore and Philadelphia, and heard the conductor's cry, it quite made us start, it was such a familiar sound. A few moments more, and we were jolting along the quiet, sleepy streets, once so familiar to our feet. As we passed on, the sound of the old "Town-Hall clock" fell upon our ear. It must be—yes, it was—the very old clock we knew; so wondrously old, and its spire so wondrously high, tapering right into the sky, and visible for miles.

We visited that dear and lovely haunt of our girlish days, "the Brandywine." We wished to see if the little sacred spots we had cherished in memory were the same.

Four years do not pass without leaving some traces; for, however noiseless the tread of the Graybeard, his footsteps are always discernible. He had, however, trodden very lightly over the little village which bears the name of this far-famed stream. Down on the water's edge the same old moss-grown flour-mills; and, on "*the walk*," the same brick mansions of the proprietors, with their green blinds, and grounds laid out in fantastic curves, half-moons, and triangles; the same clang of the cooper's hammer; and now, as ever, a bright fire in the temple of Vulcan; the "*Bishop's House*," on the "*Race*," was rather more luxuriantly covered with dark, rich foliage, but otherwise it looked the same; the rose-bushes climb to the back eaves as they did in former times; the spring-house had not moved an inch from its old place over the *Race*; the old maple, overhanging the water, was the identical one to which we owed so many tumbles when climbing up its jagged branches to look for the nest of Madame Redbreast.

We turned up the self-same path that our childish feet had so often trod; the placid stream on one side, and berry-bushes, with their delicate blossoms, on the other. We went on, amid a wilderness of sweet-

ness, under the same thick-shaded maples and graceful elms, till we reached the "*dam*" that used to be the grand boundary of our early walks. High hills, skirted by woods, rose on the left, and, on the right, terminated in a deep gorge, through which little brooks tinkled as though myriads of fairy-revelers tripped it there to the music of their own silken bells.

There was the same old log, serving for a rustic bridge, where we had angled for minnows many a day. Along the borders of the stream the same clumps of willows, shagged with green away down to the earth, and at their roots troops of flowers, bending their blue and crimson cups to the water, while, in the light, breaking through their branches, swarmed clans of bright-hued insects, dipping their gay wings in the liquid gold of morning. Our heart yearned toward the familiar scene, so we sat down on a seat soft as the richest velvet carpet, and bent our head.

We had laughed and shouted above this water in our childish days ; we had played beside it when the summers were young eternities of brightness. Every pebble had a familiar look to us ; every ripple and every feathered thing spoke a language that we could perfectly understand. No more ; ah, never more, to us can those happy hours return !

We crossed the Water-fall on the same stepping-stones, and hurried over the springy ground beyond ;

then we walked slowly up the narrow path, and paused beneath the deep space of a broad-leaved bass-wood; there was the same dear old woods, and the same dingle of tangled vines we had left four years ago.

Dear was the boyish hand that tied those wild-vines together; dear was that kindly hand, and none the less dear is it now though it may never again rest upon the head it has toyed with hours and hours together! His head has a sweet pillow among flowers, and streams, and beautiful singing-birds, and budding vines, which fold their arms about him like a living sleeper. Oh, those rare, bright days! Again we seemed to clap our hands, and laugh and shout, until the old woods rang with ten thousand answering echos; again we linked the white-petaled blossoms together, and decked our foreheads like would-be duchesses; again we take the "pet seat," and tell long stories from fairy-books to the little nestlers around us, sending many a dewlike messenger from rosy cheeks to the tip of a clover-leaf!

Alas! those days are passed forever and forever! But we bless God for the rich memories clinging to every tree and hillock!

XXXIII.

VISIT TO FATHER'S GRAVE—EARLY RECOLLECTIONS.

WASHINGTON, APRIL, 1857.

WE visited, on the "Brandywine," all the old spots of interest, not forgetting the old "Farm-House," where parties from town generally stopped for a glass of water from the finest well in all the country round. As it appeared in sight, we thought but little change had been there. The garden and out-houses looked trim and nice; the well that had labored so faithfully in the cause of temperance for many a year looked just the same; close within the curb rested the gray old bucket, with its mossy brim, to fill which with the clear, sparkling fluid, was such a merry feat.

As we had always been kindly received here, we paused at the door, and tapped lightly at first, then more heavily; but no answer came. Raising the latch, we stepped over the threshold, and found ourself in the well-remembered apartment. There was very little change there. The eight-day clock was ticking as of old; the same cross-beams overhead, set off with festoons of dried herbs, and the same swing-shelf, suspended by bits of leather attached to the ends, on which were the same rusty, worn-out books. Venerable Ladies' Magazines, full of miracles and apparitions, ranged against the wall side by side

with Pilgrim's Progress and Miss Leslie's Cook-Book. The smell of thyme and peppermint pervaded the room, scenting the atmosphere like Solomon's dinner of herbs. On the walls hung the same curious specimens of exploded art: portraits of Washington and Jackson, and a representation of the death of the latter, about as graceful and life-like as the plaster-busts of Clay and Webster hawked about by Italians. Under a wooden chair was the same old house-dog, resting his nose on his two forepaws and looking very knowingly about him.

But we missed the blind bull-finch's cage, which always used to hang in the window with a canopy of the weeds that birds delight in; and in the place of the good matron's rocking-chair, stood a cradle, with a child nearly a year old, who, on hearing us enter, raised its little night-capped head from the pillow, and crowed with infinite delight at the sight of a stranger. There did not seem to be another creature in the house; and we were on the point of proceeding to the garden, when a woman, with her hair blown over her face and a basket on her arm, appeared.

She insisted on blowing the horn to call her husband from the field; and presently a strange man, with an old, torn straw hat on his head and a hoe on his shoulder, extended his large bony hand and welcomed "the stranger" with the uncalculating hospitality of an Arab.

Gradually there dawned in that face a half familiar likeness, and very soon we recognized it as the tall, lanky boy, with an awkward stoop, who always handed us the "*gourd*" to drink from. But where was his mother, with her gray-yarn knitting and muslin cap—she, who always wore a pair of silver-mounted spectacles over her dovelike eyes, and sometimes knitted up her yarn to "*try a race*" with a certain little visitor?

Ah! *change* has been here! *She* sleeps in the churchyard over the stream yonder; and this stout-built, honest-faced man is the lanky boy who used to play checkers with kernels of red and yellow corn. He drew the back of his horny hand two or three times across his eyes, as he bluntly gave us these particulars, while his wife busied herself very earnestly with the baby, having the kindness of heart to forbear noticing his emotion.

On our way home we stole into the quiet old graveyard, which, as a child, we had so often visited, then studded here and there with solitary mounds, but now thickly populated with the dead. The headstones, once white, new, and beautiful, now wear a grayish hue, the dust lying thick upon some of them.

There, in that quiet churchyard, dear reader, we first heard the burial-service, then new to us; alas! how familiar now!

We can recall that warm, sunny, October day. A

cold, still figure lay in our home ; weights were upon the closed eyes to keep down the lids ; and the rigid hands lay as they had been placed on the bosom. Tears had wetted the pillow ; warm lips had strove with kisses to melt the gathering ice of death, and a voice had gone up to Heaven pleadingly. But all in vain !

We could not comprehend why, on this day, we were dressed in a black slip and black sleeve-knots ; and, as our childish feet wound through the open gate into the graveyard, we sometimes stooped from the guiding hand to pick up the scarlet and yellow leaves, which made this place of graves strangely gay.

The coffin was set down beside an open grave ; the burial-service was read, and then they laid the coffin upon ropes and gently lowered it ; then a shovelful of loose soil was thrown upon the coffin. We recall, even now, the tightened clasp of a cold hand that drew us up to the grave's brink as those cold clods fell upon the loved bosom.

They filled up the grave and placed green sods upon the mound they raised ; and, when all was done, we went away ; and the next day we were chasing the runaway bees, or playing with toys in our baby-house, or wondering why a pale, sad face was all the time weeping.

October went by ; the brooks grew chillier ; and then the bare trees were wreathed in white ; and that

mound of earth, lost beneath the deep snow of winter, was forgotten by all but the stricken family. One mourner kept a path well trodden; and though we could not then comprehend why her face bent tearfully over that grave, we learned in after years (ah, how bitterly!) what it meant. We have comprehended, since then, what it is to have a coffin and a heap of earth between one's self and the author of one's being.

Many an hour, in blissful childhood, we passed in that quiet graveyard, with only one companion. Many a lesson was taught us beside that green mound, of One who watched over the "widow and the fatherless" in their helplessness, counted all their tears, and lightened all their burdens.

Widowed and fatherless! What a world of meaning is expressed in these words! Reader, not till you stand in some trial of life, and feel the want of your accustomed counselor and friend,—not until then can you thoroughly comprehend the world of bereavement contained in that short phrase, "*widowed and fatherless!*"

XXXIV.

REFLECTIONS ON NEW YORK—CONTRAST WITH WASHINGTON.

WASHINGTON, APRIL, 1857.

OUR Southern home has gained astonishingly, in our estimation, by a peep at New York. How weary, stale, flat, and unprofitable; and how beautiful, how refreshing, as we were borne homeward by the wings of steam through woods and valleys that seemed to revive us as by a bath of verdure, after the stony desert of the great metropolis!

During our brief visit there we were struck with the money-loving, money-grasping spirit which seemed to pervade all classes of the community. It appears to be the end and aim of life to become *rich! rich!* Money seems "the one thing needful," an iron safe "the ark of the covenant," and the multiplication table "the table of the law." We have, we think, a proper estimate of the worth of money; but we turn from the hard nature that would make it a solitary object of worship; that would rest merely upon what *he has* for a ground of supremacy. We would as soon expect to pick a fragrant flower from under the scorching lava effused by a volcano, as discover a tender feeling in such a heart.

This worship of the molten calf is apparent everywhere. The children, as soon as they are out of long-clothes, fancy themselves on the road to be-

come Rothschilds; and, we verily believe, that were you to drop a New York speculator out of a caravan in the desert, his first notion would be to establish a water company at the nearest well. New York is also emphatically a city of diversities—the diversities of extreme poverty and extreme wealth.

The poor of New York! What a writer he would be who would burst upon the wondering world with their history! What a picture to weep tears over!

New York is also a city where a great cause produces a small effect. During our stay a fearful fire occurred in the vicinity of our stopping-place. The terrible element raged wildly for hours, sweeping onward in its wild might, shooting afar its glowing columns, wrapping its folds around stately buildings, crackling and sparkling, or leaping upward in wild triumph as the noise of the falling mass proclaimed how impotent had been every effort to stay the violence of the mad destructive torrent; and yet, though a whole street was burned down, there were numbers in our hotel who continued quietly snoozing in their beds, or mentally denounced "*those noisy firemen*" between naps; and, before the following night, the whole affair seemed to pass from the minds of all but the sufferers. A dozen funerals go by the windows in one day, and nobody seems sobered by it.

With regard to the gentler sex, both old and young seem occupied in striving, bustling, and elbow-

ing each other, in order to obtain front seats in the theatre of fashion. Their life seems really a battle of chairs and mirrors, plate and equipage. People may talk of the Wars of the two Roses, but we doubt whether they occasioned half the care or outlay produced by the grand struggle between the fair rival battalions of Fifth Avenue. For ourselves, we would rather be a "country rector" in Washington than the "sublime sultan" in New York. Pleasant was it, after the dust and drought of Broadway and the Arabia Petrea of a New York hotel, to inhale the fragrance of the sweet-brier and honeysuckle of the Capitol grounds, listen to its birds, and set foot on its elastic turf once more.

XXXV.

WASHINGTON IN MAY—MUSIC IN THE PRESIDENT'S GROUNDS.

WASHINGTON, MAY, 1857.

It is now May! balm-breathing, hope-inspiring May! warm, beaming, joyous, budding, buoyant May! In our city this genial month makes itself both felt and heard. The public grounds, yet untarnished with that unique compound which defines itself as Washington dust, are quivering with the light verdure of their delicate flowers, and bright with the tufted blossoms of their early shrubs. The ever-

greens have lost their gloomy prominence, surrounded as they are by a wilderness of roses, and the tender green of the tulip-trees, and masses of woodbine and clematis, around which the bees are murmuring their admiring joy. The birds are heard anew amid the lonely glades; and the scent of flowers overpower the motley odors of the public streets. The long boughs of the lilac-bushes rustle in the wind with all their young, soft leaves; and low on the dark soil at their feet is a faint lustre of primroses. In the public gardens, with the Babel muffling its voice faintly in the distance, you can hear, if you listen, that sacred rustle of growth and renewing which belongs to the sweet, sweet spring. In the soft twilight you can see the earth opening her bosom with a passive, grateful sweetness, to the inspiring touch of heaven. The brown soil is moist with showers, and the young leaves glisten faintly with globules of dew.

It is a May afternoon, soft and calm. The high-bred horses of many a glittering equipage are pawing the grounds with impatience before the stately dwellings of the "West End." It is one of those balmy, spring afternoons, when sorrow appears to have forsaken her habitation upon the earth.

Join us, dear reader, in a saunter to the *White House* grounds, where the *Marine Band* is playing, and all the Washington world are looking on. There you may admire, in a mass, the carriages and horses which have singly startled you by their beauty. *We*

must walk, though we assure you the exercise of riding would be much more agreeable to our health and inclination. We must walk for the same reason which prevented the town of *Etampes* from firing its cannon in honor of the arrival of "Henri Fourth:" *Etampes had* no cannon, and we *have* no carriage. The grounds are already filled with children pursuing their balls and butterflies, and nursery maids pursuing their flirtations, while the cool waters of the fountain leap into the air from a marble basin in the centre. Take a seat upon one of the iron lounges, and you may enjoy the view around.

You may gaze admiringly upon eglantines and roses grouped together in their richest mass of bloom; upon clematis wreathing itself fold on fold, and festoon above festoon, in luxuriance above the terrace of the *Executive mansion*; upon the gay verandas and Genoese blinds, which bask in the quivering shadows of the dying sunshine; upon the bright open carriages with their May-colored freight, like moving beds of tulips; and upon the tribes of fair-faced and richly-dressed little people sporting upon the grass. Nothing but opulence, nothing but luxury, nothing but health and hilarity within view.

The fashionable world chat in their carriages, and the pedestrians discourse in various shades of talk on the grass and thoroughfares below, while the sun shines gayly on the heads of both. But between these two extremes there chatters an intermediary

class, that portion of the crowd which the gay world attaches to its services, and dresses up in gaudy raiments. These last, always a strutting, saucy species, are on this day more than usually self-sufficient. It is highly amusing to see the looks of polite contempt with which the footman, in his full-dress livery, surveys the mechanic and artisan, who, in their turn, look upon the creature in his livery hat as a species of "Merry-Andrew."

A considerable group of those parti-colored gentry are congregated together near the empty carriages which the fair occupants have vacated, discussing, with a freedom of speech which Congress might have envied, the Pharaohs under whose especial bondage they wear their several badges of slavery, their silver lace and gold.

Come *now* to Washington, dear reader! Come, and the broad wavy public grounds, spangled all over with green, shall be your thoroughfare, and the trees shall be a canopy to sit under. Crowded rooms and gas lights become gross and tawdry, when violets and woodbine are all around you.

XXXVI.

CLOSE OF THE SEASON.

WASHINGTON, MAY, 1857.

WASHINGTON during the session of Congress, as compared with Washington two months after the close of that body, is as the magnified flea in the plates of a treatise upon entomology, compared with the same insect in its natural condition. And yet our city is far more merry than is usually the case after the close of the "session," for it is galvanized by the unnatural vitality which is apt to vivify Washington society in the onset of a new administration. Those all-enduring, all-hoping beings,—waiters after government loaves and fishes,—still fill our streets, and while golden visions of futurity are knotting up their brains into strange devices, we fear the purses of some few are hugging their last sixpence. The applicants for the foreign appointments have some time yet to wait for the verdict. The worst fit of indigestion after a lobster salad, all olives and anchovies, is an agreeable sensation compared with their flutter of mind and body while awaiting the result.

Alas, for the new President and his Cabinet! If they have not grown an inch taller in the last two months, they are certainly a year older! Little did they dream, when they first dove their heads to the

bottom of government affairs, that they would come up with a care lodged in every wrinkle. It is whispered that the President declares, with a melancholy shake of the head, that "he has not time to say his prayers." We think this distinguished gentleman would be justified in adopting the necromantic formula of the enchantress Queen in the Arabian Nights. Let him take a little water in his hand, as Mrs. Hemans once advised in a similar dilemma, and throw into the face of each, saying as he does so, "Quit the human form which thou disgracest, and assume that of an ox;" we have no doubt some insufferable men would thus be got rid of, and some very good oxen joined to society.

The *fashionable season* is over: unless the human race can be strengthened and magnified by the progress of modern science, we know not how future generations are to resist the increasing stress upon the human energies here. Within the last few years the "West End" of our city has nearly doubled in extent; yet people are expected to get through the same number of visits per day, extending from "Capitol Hill" to Georgetown and Bladensburg, as when the latter place was a rural retreat in the neighborhood of the metropolis, where gentlemen went to shoot each other in duels for pastime.

The close of *the season* here affords to the contemplative a fertile subject for meditation, and the amount of disappointed ambitions and frustrated pretensions

whirled off from our city by every successive railway train would supply matter enough for a thousand homilies. For one that succeeds in his projects, ninety and nine are they who, at the close of the season, are taught to measure, by exorbitant bills, the wildness of their schemes, as well as the amount of their disappointment.

The morning receptions by the niece of the President have been unhappily suspended by the sudden death of Mr. B.'s nephew. We attended the first given by Miss Lane, and we think Mr. Buchanan most fortunate in having so interesting a relative to do the honors of the Executive mansion. Miss L. is a blonde, with violet eyes, soft and beautiful as a dream. Her manners are self-possessed enough to command admiration, even if her position were less distinguished.

XXXVII.

DEATH OF JUDGE BUTLER.

WASHINGTON, MAY, 1857.

ANOTHER brilliant star in our political hemisphere has set; another light has gone out.

For eleven years Judge Butler has occupied a prominent position in the public eye; faithfully performing arduous duties; ably executing high and

weighty trusts. All who have been most familiar with his efforts in the Senate-chamber will agree that what he left most impressed upon his hearers, was the interest with which his own character and temperament invested his subject. All who have heard him can recall the extraordinary picturesqueness and vigor of his style. There was a glow, a rich, quick, and expansive feeling transfused through his speaking, like the outpourings of an improvisatrice; in his whole style of thought and utterance, something vivid, heroical, and generous. The qualities of his heart softened and checked the impulses of a fiery temper and vehement will. That he should have been without warm dislikings as well as warm attachments, would imply an impossibility. But, from everything petty or rancorous, he was absolutely free, and his opposition, if it was uncompromising, was always open and manly. To the good or great qualities of an opponent he always did justice.

But we leave to abler pens the task of delineating the character of Judge Butler, as he appeared in his public capacity; our more limited object is to embody in a few words our sense of what he was *as a man*.

No man ever descended to the grave more widely honored and respected by those who did not personally know him, or more tenderly beloved by those who did. The latest act of one whose whole life was kindness, was for the good of those who had no

claim upon him ; his kindly impulses leading him to exertion even under the pressure of disease. The ruling purpose of his life seemed to be to diffuse happiness to his fellow-creatures. To his surviving daughter the priceless legacy of *such* a character should be more precious than rubies.

Among our public men he stood almost alone in his generous appreciation and notice of the artistic and literary talent of our city. Oh inexorable death ! Depressed and overlooked in this political atmosphere, to whom now shall they turn ? He stood alone, and has died leaving no fellows.

There, perhaps, never was a man gifted with such a universality of sympathy with talent and intellectual superiority. But it is not a theme for discussion here. We leave it in that obscurity to which it was his own wish it should be consigned. It is registered above, and written on the memories of those who were the objects of his aid.

The large heart is cold and still beneath a shroud ; the earth is settling down upon his remains ; his voice is hushed forever. We shall no more encounter his manly figure on the avenues of our city. We shall no more recognize in the distance the well-known silvery hair, streaming disheveled around his countenance. In the social circle, which so delighted in the genial company of the "old man eloquent," his place shall know him no more forever. We feel of a truth that he has left a void which can never be

filled up ; that in him Washington has lost a beloved presence from her midst.

Should we not feel it is an honor to have received any demonstration of his confidence and kindness ?

XXXVIII.

ART ASSOCIATION—ITALIAN BANDIT.

WASHINGTON, MAY, 1857.

THERE has been an “Art Association” recently formed here by some of the most deserving and meritorious artists in our city. The object of this association is to establish a “National Gallery of the Fine Arts” in the metropolis of the nation, to call the attention of government and the country to the neglects, the narrowness, and the caprices of national patronage ; to ask protection for genius ; to excite our public men to constitute themselves the true patrons of the living genius of the land. If the genius of our native artists reflect credit upon us as a nation, which is acknowledged abroad, does not native talent deserve every encouragement from America ?

Louis XIV., two hundred years ago, allotted 80,000 francs a year to his forty members of the Academy of Art. Frederick II. gave appointments to a whole corps of literary men ; and, at this moment, there is not a man of any literary distinction

in Paris who has not a share in the liberal patronage of Louis Napoleon's government, either in office or public pension.

The "Art Association" has already succeeded in establishing a fine gallery of paintings, many of them possessing great merit. It is thrown open to the public every day, and we purpose, from time to time, noticing the different productions of our artists.

This collection contains one picture which fascinates us. It is a very sad picture; and, as we recall it to our memory, the bare recollection brings back the same painful feelings we experienced when we looked at it. Several days have passed since our visit,—a visit which was only an hour in length,—and we may not give a very faithful description; however, dear reader, when you visit Washington, go and see it for yourself.

The subject is the "*Italian Bandit's Death*."* The figures are life-size, and of great depth of color—A woman, with a face convulsed with anguish and despair, with every muscle strained, is endeavoring to drag her dying husband under the shelter of the woods from the range of his pursuers. The robber has been fatally wounded; already the death-damps steal over his face,—a face seamed and lined with heavy marks; his failing hands cover, with a clutching expression, the wound, and we see the heavy sleep of death creep over the sinking form.

* This fine painting is by "Rositon."

How beautiful and holy the expression of the woman's face and figure! with what earnestness and energy she seeks to bear her husband under the cover of the thicket! and we tremble as we look at it, for the leaden weight of death is too much for her strength. She sends her straining gaze up to the blue sky with a yearning, imploring look like that of one who despairs of earthly aid.

Both will be lost, we think, and the breath is held with anxious apprehension, but with this apprehension comes a feeling of hope: there is a chance of escape for the wife at least, and this hope softens and relieves the terrible action represented in the picture. But what a spiritual beauty the woman's expression gives to the painting! That wife's love for the dying man! More than the hope of escape does it relieve the sad subject; it elevates it; for, even if both are lost, there is the recollection of that evidence of one of the most beautiful feelings in nature,—devoted love, even to self-sacrifice, for the object.

“Oh, while those pitying eyes
Are bending thus above him,
In vain the death-dews rise—
Thou dost regret, and love him!
He seeks thy gaze in vain—
Earth reels and fades before him;
He dies, but feels no pain,
Thy sweet face shining o'er him!”

XXXIX.

THE INTELLIGENCER DOG.

WASHINGTON, JUNE, 1857.

WE were walking down Seventh Street yesterday in a meditative mood, thinking of the —, that is, wondering what in all the world we should find to say that our readers would care to hear,—a desperate mood for one to be in,—when our meditations were suddenly put to flight by the appearance of the noble dog, so well known here as the property of the venerable editors of the *Intelligencer*. He held in his mouth a basket containing papers on their way to the post-office.

That noble animal's appearance was "*manna and quails*" to us. His sage, decorous face, and stately air of sobriety, deserved notice in print.

Nay, drop the uplifted eyebrow, dear reader! We consider the general importance of the canine race considerably underrated. Historians have scarcely done justice to the great part they have played in the world from the days of Cerberus until now. There is comfort, however, in reflecting that it is chiefly by the inferior classes of society their consequence is impugned.

Catharine the Great, an empress who used to give away, as New-Year's gifts, estates equaling in extent an American county, hazarded but one attempt

at poetry in her imperial life, which was an epitaph on her lap-dog, an effusion which few crowned heads have surpassed.

Byron perpetuated, in the monument at Newstead, his attachment to a dog, whom he bewailed as his only friend; and all the world knows that Newton did but one silly thing in his life, which was in favor of the identical little dog whose unlucky trespass of demolishing a year's work of calculation he so generously forgave. Even the great "Sir Walter" was seldom seen, either in life or on canvas, unaccompanied by his dog.

After *such* examples, our humble pen need not hesitate to employ itself upon one of a race which has been distinguished by those great men with similar favor.

In describing the *Intelligencer* dog, conceive it, dear reader, a stately mastiff of the first magnitude, with noble features and wavy ears. If we might presume to give advice to Edwin Landseer, to whom the species is largely indebted, we would recommend him, when next he has to paint a royal dog, to study the courtly and dignified carriage of our Washington favorite.

This noble animal is said to be descended from a race from the land where Hampden bled in the field and Sidney on the scaffold. Pages might be spun out of his ancestors. But, as remote periods of history have ceased to interest our superficial age, un-

less got up by "Macaulay," we leave the sacred dust of his forefathers to the Archeological Society, whose business it is to rake up all such dust.

Since the dog in the famous picture, which has been worked in Berlin wool at every boarding-school, never was animal so popular. From the venerable senior editor in his invalid chair, to the little printer's "devil" in the mechanical department, he is welcomed with joy, and allowed to express his personal likings and dislikings as freely as a crowned head. All study his conveniences and caprices almost before their own; and the noble animal is not unworthy of these favors. He is a loving and affectionate dog, walking with measured step at his master's side, looking with expressive attached eyes into his face; and when, as now, in feeble health, crouching beside him with the air of a miniature lion guarding a king.

If this faithful dog could write, why, he might achieve a pamphlet on "politics," out of the table-talk of his master's political friends. Think seriously, dear public, of his peculiar advantages as an unsuspected "confidant" of the first statesman of the day. The noble "*Old Line Whig*" politicians converse together without restraint in his presence; and the lamented Clay was said to seek advice of these Napoleons of the press within reach of this dog's long ears.

It is said he is discerning enough to discriminate

between a "*Whig*" and a "*Democrat*," and that his eyes glare upon the latter, like Mr. Murdoch in Richard. It is also asserted that he gave an *affirmative* wag of the tail when the news of General Taylor's election was announced ; but stood stoutly on his four limbs, with a *negative* wag, when the sad reverse, and Mr. Buchanan's triumph was proclaimed.

XL.

SUMMER BOARDING.

WASHINGTON, JUNE, 1857.

WE passed a summer at a boarding place not a hundred miles from Washington, while in ill health, not long since. "*A quiet farm-house in the country, with no other boarders,*" had been advised by our physician. Accordingly, a single lady, from the North, residing in a cheerless farm-house, consented to receive us. This lady had a high opinion of her own dignity, and wished us distinctly to understand "*she did not take boarders.*" It was a special favor shown us.

How well we remember our feelings as we approached the "respectable"-looking establishment that was to be our home during the warm weather ! We say "respectable," and we imply by the term dreary as well. How dull it was ! A dim brick

house, with drowsy windows, the very sight of which induced a conviction that if you once entered and sat down, you would never have energy to rise again. One can judge of the inmates from the aspect of an abode; and, in this case, the occupant was to the full as mournful as the edifice.

Our future companion was a harsh, perpendicular woman. Her hair was so carefully brushed and pomatumed, that it seemed one glossy convex surface; her neck-ribbon was crossed upon her bosom, the two ends of precisely the same length; and her pocket-handkerchief, which she held between the thumb and forefinger of the left hand, was allowed to spread itself upon the three remaining fingers in a very becoming manner; her peculiar character extended to everything about her.

And yet—would you believe it, dear reader?—(I know you won't,) our hostess had a wooer who came every Saturday, in a black suit that gave him exactly the air of a master-undertaker, and proceeded to his grave courtship of her charms—in the *savings bank*.

Poor man! His toilet on these occasions was evidently a subject of great anxiety with him. That dress-coat had, we doubt not, been set apart for years for high and solemn occasions. How well we remember that dull, square sitting-room, where we all three sat often, without a sound audible but the measured grate of the pendulum of an old clock,

through whose dusty glass the hours seemed ashamed to show their faces! On the mantel-piece was a glass case containing all that remained of a pet Guinea fowl, which, thanks to the genius of some Yankee naturalist, had been made to assume the appearance of a nondescript ornithological specimen that would have sadly puzzled Audubon. The slate-colored paper; the sad-colored, wool-bare Scotch carpet; the dingy baize that covered the tables; the worn-out books ranged against the wall; and, above all, a perpetual odor of peppermint that pervaded the room in which our hostess was in the habit of drying the herbs from her garden.

Never was there so dum a courtship! The spinster would sit and sew; the calculating, demure bachelor sit and *hem*. The flies buzzing in the window, especially when in the morning preserving had been going on, formed the only enlivenment of the place. On replying to her chilling monosyllables,—which, like the old clock, struck only every quarter of an hour,—touching changes of weather, as demonstrated by “shooting-corns” and “twinges of rheumatics,” he would vainly endeavor to ascertain the sentiments of his gaunt companion by a scrutinizing glance at her parchment visage. But, alas! there was more expression in the green eyes of the tabby at her feet than in the ghastly spectacles which marked the movements of her own! The very cat had sat on

its woolen cushion, at the feet of its mistress, till it had not energy to move.

One evening there had been a dead silence, of much longer duration than usual. The gentleman appeared engaged in examining two portraits of "Luther" and "Melancthon," which were suspended in black frames from the slate-colored wall. For ourselves, we felt afraid that we would commit something very absurd, dispel the sort of nightmare that was stifling us, by some violent gesture, perhaps by dealing a blow at the hapless "Guinea fowl," which stood placidly before us.

We determined, in a feeling little short of desperation, to bring some life and light into the stagnant atmosphere of that unincidental apartment, and we ventured upon a remark so comical that the grave lover was obliged to laugh outright, in spite of himself. Our voluble audacity had a still more remarkable effect upon our hostess. Never had we seen her so near the verge of an emotion. She did not venture on so strong a measure as to speak, but she opened her spectacle-case, shut it again, displaced her spool of cotton, half rose from her seat, and, after various little preparatory *hems*, turned upon us a look—*such* a look! We are sure if Middleton, of our city, had only interest with her to procure the recipe for it, it might save him some hundreds a year in the management of his *Ice-Houses*.

The sedate lover was *her* property, and our attack upon him seemed to *her* almost as felonious as a footpad's "*stand and deliver!*"

We never heard that the little stream which ran by this "Farm-House" had a spray, yet certain it is that while we were an inmate here a moisture bedewed our eyes almost incessantly; indeed, showers of tears were quotidian in that sepulchral dwelling. The slate-colored curtains in our chamber used actually to vibrate with our sobs. When friends from "home" were expected, we bathed our eyes with *Eau de Cologne* from a bottle which looked like a wedding-present from Sir Charles Grandison to Harriet Byron, and, when they arrived, came down bright and smiling, so that they who were not in the secret of the "Cologne water" decided that we were the happiest of our sex.

The heart of the gallant "Don John of Austria" did not beat more wildly on being apprised of his imperial parentage when invited to the presence of his royal brother, than ours when we heard the familiar accents of the messenger sent to bear us to our home.

The summer passed with that "Connecticut spinster" and her "Vermont wooer" gave a coloring to our after-life, and an ineradicable distaste for everything and everybody from the North.

XLI. _

SUMMER HEAT AND DUST.

WASHINGTON, JUNE, 1857.

SUMMER is upon us—and *such* a summer! Our city a vast furnace; the aristocratic portion of the world flying in all directions; the *attachés* to the foreign embassies on leave in the direction of the North Pole; and it is even whispered that Middleton has just entered into a contract with a Northern company for a thousand tons of ice, to rescue the metropolis of the nation from a general conflagration.

So sultry is the weather that, till sunset, few have courage to venture out of doors; and even then, if one escapes the *sun*, the *dust* is inevitable. Among the plagues of Egypt, why was dust omitted? Every sense is infected by it,—eyes, ears, nose, palate, all are in a state of torment: every charm of the city is dust-eaten. No one opens his eyes or mouth save on peril of ophthalmia, and of eating the bread of grittiness for the remainder of the day. Those who venture out look as tanned and yellow as the parched herbage of a review-ground in the dog-days. The air of the Avenue is tainted with the commingled vapors of restaurants and cigars not worth a farthing. The fragrant acacia-trees no longer array the public gardens with their bridal veil of white.

They, too, wear a dingy hue from the dust. The better half of the population is already off to the watering-places; and the very sun, like an old plated-candlestick, begins to show copper in place of its customary brightness.

Amid this dust and heat few can forbear to sigh after the country, with its silvery birches bathing their drooping branch-tips in the brooks. The parched dreariness of the city recalls to mind the grassy freshness of the "White Sulphur's" velvet lawn. Most of our citizens are booked for watering-places. Some talk of being iced every morning at "Guntier's," lest they should dissolve in the course of the day. Anything that seems to approximate us to an atmosphere free from dust and heat is a prospect which is positively refreshing.

In conversation, everybody asks everybody where everybody else is going. The question engrosses all. Our own mind is made up. Novelty is not a passion with us. We believe it to be the spring of many vices, and the stimulant of many disasters. In a few weeks the city will be what is called empty; nothing will be left but "P. P. C.'s" and ice-carts moving in the dusty streets. Thanks to the railways, which are rapidly making one huge gridiron of the whole civilized world, we hope to be, before many weeks, where there are no hot pavements flashing back the light into our faces, or, cramped-up streets, where the air is stifled into sickliness. We hope to be in the green woods, with

broad, wavy meadows for our thoroughfares, and little sparkling streams, leaping and dancing over rocks, for our lullaby.

We confess to very homely tastes, and we do long to see once more old Mooly, with her horns and sensible face; the hens, with their domestic motherly ways; and the geese, with their pretty necks and tea-party voices.

Dear reader, when you hear from us again it will be from ——. We didn't say where—did we?

* * * * *

If we ever indulged in the interjection extorted from Mrs. Butler by the sight of the Falls of Niagara, we might be taxed by our readers, like that lady, with ending our article like a German melodrama. But as we have no desire to imitate the lady referred to, we will relate, as succinctly and distinctly as the state of our feelings will admit, that the noble *Old Line Whig Dog*, so lately appearing in print, the majestic king of the canine race here, has been feloniously murdered. Some *Fra Diavolo*, jealous of his popularity, has committed this wanton act. The consternation caused by this sad event, the respect conceded to the remains of the victim, over whom the earth has closed forever, the perplexity of the panic-struck police, need not be dwelt upon. Since the days of Blue Beard's wife never was that respectable fraternity so bewildered by a fatal discovery.

XLII.

JOURNEY TO THE WHITE SULPHUR SPRINGS.

GREENBRIER, JULY, 1857.

Do you wish to know, dear reader, how we got here? Not, alas! upon the enchanted carpet of the Arabian Tale, upon which its owner had only to seat himself and think of where he wished to be conveyed, and behold, the wish was realized before it had been uttered, and in a second he found himself transported to the farthestmost parts of the earth!

Our flittings were less easy, for we were passed, like parish vagrants, from boat to cars and from cars to stages. We rose at daybreak, and left Washington the abode of silence. No sight or sign of life to be seen in the closed stores; nothing but a solitary house-maid peeping here and there from the windows, like the stork which our modern painters regularly put into the corner of their landscape to express the sublime of solitude. On the cars at Alexandria we found some three or four agricultural Peers of Virginia, who evidently invested their ambition in the manuring of land and fattening of cattle. They had been to the city to examine patent machines for doing in an uncommon way all that their farming forefathers used to do in a common, when barley was reaped with a sickle. One of the number, a dear old man, was explaining to his neighbors,

a loverlike-looking couple, the mode of cultivation to be bestowed upon some New Zealand spinach, of which a plant would cover three-quarters of an acre, glancing at a valuable stratum of blue clay he had discovered on his farm, and finally anchoring down upon the history of a patent plow. When he had proceeded as far in this episode as his purchase of the plow and its embarkation, one of his hearers uttered a profound sigh, while the lady bestowed a glance—as nearly resembling an angry look as she was capable of assuming—on the speaker, who was preventing a pleasant flirtation.

Seated very near us was an old sea-captain, who, after a long talk about preserved limes and arrow-root biscuit, mentioned that he had been in quarantine off the Lazaretto, for on the passage in from Havana the purser had died, actually died, of yellow fever! There was a general start at this intelligence; some of the passengers looking with satisfaction at the voluminous extent of plank which divided the old tar from themselves. At the first stopping-place several of the ladies went straight to a drug-store, and drank, in the shop, half a phial of antipestiferous drops, and then caused their dresses to be fumigated with a liquid such as is used by the officers of health at the hospitals, bringing in the ear with them a pungent odor of the vinegar.

About midway of our route we made a momentary stoppage at a little village, where every window

seemed closed. The only house that showed signs of life was a red brick, whose carved wood-work formed a melancholy memento of the domestic architecture of Sir Walter Raleigh's time. There was a cedar or two in the garden, looking as if it had strayed from *Mount Carmel*, and a group of boys playing at hop-scotch in the summer dust, who set up a derisive shout as our passage effaced their boundaries. We should not be surprised to hear, some fine morning, that the inhabitants were all dead of the *dulls*, and that the jury brought in a verdict of *died* for want of the common pastimes of life. If the *Warm Springs*—where every one on a tour of the mountains betakes himself to a night's rest—exhibited the stillness of elegant valetudinarianism, this place was more than paralyzed by the stagnation of dullness.

The house where we breakfasted, after leaving the Warm Springs,—such a breakfast, steaming *café du lait*, and transparent slices of ham!—presented a pleasing contrast to the meal we took a year ago on our way home *from* the Springs. How well we remember that weather-beaten little man who took the head of the table and did the honors! How well we can recall the dainty dishes of every imaginable and unimaginable kind, which were forced upon us by the despotic host! And the tough, hale, stringy beef-steak; he inquired if it was to our liking with such an infectious relish and hearty good faith, pressing on us by turn more gravy, and more fat, and a ra-

cier bit of the brown, that at last we almost believed in the beef ourselves!

There were in the stages three or four Southern planters, in large, low-crowned, broad-rimmed straw hats, wearing their clothing in a careless, *nonchalant*, care-for-nothing sort of air. Though destitute of that fashionable exterior which the tailor supplies, they had an *air distingue*, inimitable by the formal Northerners with all their Frenchifications. We were forcibly struck by the contrast, in manner and consideration for the comfort of the ladies, manifested by these representatives of different sections of our country. *Why is this?* The blood of both, we presume, flows down to them from Magna Charta. Into whatever position of life a Southern gentleman may be thrown, the *gentleman* is apparent. Good breeding appears innate. In his linen traveling wrap, in a crowded stage, or in a controversial debate in the Capitol of the nation, the stamp of superiority is equally apparent.

Our readers will think there was nothing very enviable in our position during the latter portion of the route, when we tell them to imagine us seated between an old lady with a starched apron and a bundle tied in a cotton handkerchief, and a grave individual, who was peeling superannuated walnuts and peppering the road below with the shells. The moment we were in motion, the good woman put all our cogitations to flight by the loquacity of her confidences

concerning a New York family, where she had been living as housekeeper, with all the events that had come to her knowledge there. Then followed notes, historical and biographical, of her family, from which we gathered that it had been pruned of its junior branches by climate and casualties, and that only two remained extant, one of whom was inconveniently poor and absurdly prolific.

It was in vain we obtruded our head from the window, at the risk of vertebral dislocation; the volubility at our side was enough to overcome the most bigoted worshiper of fine scenery. All we could do was to look pensively interrogative, and quietly await the suspension of a fluency which had extended beyond a four-mile stone.

At last she closed with specifics for maladies pronounced mortal by the whole college of physicians.

We glanced involuntarily at the silent, sullen Killjoy on our left. He did not seem the least moved, but maintained an attitude of refrigeration that might have been borrowed from Michael Angelo's statue of Snow.

We were now left to the quiet enjoyment of dewy meadows and musky hay-fields, and very soon the tranquil coolness of the "White Sulphur's" velvet lawn met our weary eyes.

XLIII.

CHANGE OF PROPRIETORS.

GREENBRIER, JULY, 1857.

THE White Sulphur! What a vision these words bring up before the memory of those who know the beauty of this lovely place! Rows of peaceful, picturesque cottages, snuggling close in the bosom of the green slope, their shaded galleries and the tops of their chimneys peeping from the green things around, like a monument to a Sylvan.

“Virginia Row,” with its exceedingly timid, modest bearing, the roofs of the little nutshells making a steep plane from ridge-pole to eaves. The vines climbing and grouping together, and wreathing themselves, fold on fold, in such luxuriance, that an American Juliet may sit within their shelter unobserved and murmur melodious nothings in the ear of her Romeo.

Although the Springs have changed proprietors since last summer, the appearance of things is not yet materially altered. In the dining-room, the same head waiter, who stands exalted in public estimation here, like Washington’s statue on its pedestal of granite, meets our eye at the head of the immense tables, like a sentry on guard over the Crown jewels. We meet the same efficient manager of the “Cottage Department,” into whose brain is compressed reams full of statistical calculation, which, when duly emit-

ted, suffice to locate some ten hundred guests. The company is unusually large for the season; we do not suppose that the "White Sulphur" has at any time boasted so many at so early a time in July.

We have pleasing, handsome, gentlemanly young planters, calculated to pass through life with credit to themselves, without splitting the trumpet of fame by the magnitude of their doings. We have widowers, who are rubbing off the rust of their grief, and seeking consolation in an attempt to knit anew the broken chain of domestic happiness. We have some few fossil specimens of the sterner sex, with so jaunty an air that, since the days of Beau Brummell, never were middle-aged bachelors so juvenile.

We have some few stately old gentlemen, of a school now nearly extinct. To decipher their signatures in the register is not difficult, indited as they are in the large Italian hand, seldom seen except in old family Bibles and books of the last century. Their manners and characters are also, alas! of the last century—simple, downright, and kindly.

We have some few *wild* young men, who, when at college, used to make the watchmen spring their rattles for as many fires as, if real, would have made bankrupts of every insurance office in the country. These are garnished with such a shrubbery of black mustache, that they deserve the *sobriquet* of "*le soi des charbonniers.*" We have a few spruce, well-brushed *dandies*, who, in the well-starched majesty

of a better-cut coat, feel privileged to slight their plainer betters. Their charm of manner, like that of all persons whose agreeableness is assumed rather than instinctive, is easily worn with its seamy side inward and fairest gloss outward.

And yet, dear readers, the feminine gender is in the ascendant, for we have several new beauties, and the stir they make resembles a popular panic. All the gentlemen join in the general pæan, and vie with each other in attentions. Everybody suggests some new occupation for them; everybody projects some new diversion. We have also several here who are reported to be heiresses, and the gentlemen are laying active siege to these fair *El Dorados*. To get rid of their tormentors, they have caused to be circulated that they possess only a tumble-down plantation, mortgaged over rafters and roof, on the borders of a rice swamp.

We have, we regret to add, some few pious worshipers at the altar of mammon; human beings so gold-nurtured that poverty is to them the one evil of human life.

We have sedate, conventionalized editions of the romantic couples of last year, who have since then anchored themselves upon the sunken rock of matrimony. It is whispered that Gen. Walker is expected, but that he is so oppressed with humility that he does not wish it known. This distinguished gentleman need not be afraid of any embarrassing distinction

here, for he will be outroared by a whole herd of lions.

We have some few of the batches of Governors and Judges recently sent forth from the Government oven.

The ladies are already plotting "a ball" against the peace of the place. The railroad is so far completed as to render the White Sulphur only one day's journey from Washington City, and baggage is checked from Washington through to the Springs. Visitors no longer incur any risk about this matter.

XLIV.

DRESS BALL AT WHITE SULPHUR.

GREENBRIER, JULY, 1857.

MOST people have seen a *dress ball* in our cities, and those who have seen one have seen a thousand; the same blaze of light, the same band of music, the same supper-table, and the same tumult at the door. But a "ball" at the "White Sulphur" is a very different affair. There is here no fierce contention with wrangling mobs of coachmen; no confused phalanx of carriages; no panting footman; no courtesying and overheated hostess compelled to a standing position; no labored decorations of temporary ver-

ture; no tedious ascent of crowded stairs; and no peevish belles wrangling in the cloak-room.

Our first *dress ball* presented none of these objectionable features. The room was crowded, but after some difficulty we succeeded in securing a standing position.

In the train of lovely women before us, our roving eye fell upon a young, simply-dressed girl, with a cluster of wild-flowers in her hair, just such flowers as she might have picked up in passing through the woods. The tip of her head was the most we could see of her, for she was so surrounded with beaux that it was impossible to approach the footsteps of her throne. One was tormenting her with his indiscriminate flatteries; another tendering to her acceptance some of those cut-and-dried sentences which he had bestowed upon the successive belles of the ball-room for the last fifteen years. Poor girl! her countenance seemed to appeal to the aid of her lady friends as to that of good Samaritans, for she had "fallen among thieves."

It is hardly necessary to tell our readers that this fair girl is an heiress. The gentlemen here, with all their pretended *insouciance*, know pretty well from what quarter the trade-wind blows, and they are not often found elbowing each other to obtain the hand of portionless girls, even if as fair as Hebes. A few, no doubt, are attracted by the personal charms of this very lovely person, but by far the greater number

by *les beaux de sa cassette*. Few are like the Italian prince, who very frankly told an English commoner, when he made proposals for his daughter, that his chief inducement to marry an heiress, and overlook her being a heretic, was that he might repair and refurnish his palace at Genoa.

It is whispered here that this fair girl has been wooed by half the resident planters of her own State and wandering cavaliers of other States, and that she has driven some into the Mississippi and some into Lake Pontchartrain, by her obduracy. Among all the aspirants, the one who succeeds should proclaim his good fortune by sound of trumpet.

Miss — was there, in a double dress of the lightest tulle, looking as spiritual and ethereal as if she were fed on rose-leaves, and drank hyacinthine fluid from cups the size of an acorn and consistency of a canary's egg-shell. It is said that a young Georgia planter has won the heart of this fair girl, but *we* think the gentleman who was her shadow all the evening may prove the mouse to nibble a hole in the net which holds her in captivity.

The lion of the male crowd was Mr. —, who is established among the celebrities here—written in *Italics*—recognized by the public as a traveled man, who has been to the four quarters of the globe, and brought home as much useful knowledge as makes him one of the pleasantest companions in the world. Open-mouthed audiences surround him as they might

have done an oriental tale-teller. He has seen not only the "Louvre," but the domes of Mecca, and sat face to face with mummies of Cheops, by the light of Davy's safety-lamps, in the Great Pyramid. He has drank Seltzer water fresh from the rock; visited the cabinet of the Japanese palace at Dresden, and the celebrated restaurants at Toulouse, where the limbs of geese are candied in sugar.

Among the seated spectators was a group of very young girls, pupils of the widely celebrated *Patapsco Institute*, who, with their accomplished instructor, (Mr. Archer, of Maryland,) are sojourning here for a few weeks. The deportment and character of this gentleman (a graduate of West Point) present to our eye the perfection of a finished preceptor for young ladies, uniting the perfect gentleman with scholastic abilities of a rare order. His "Institute" fully sustains the high reputation of his predecessor, Mrs. Phelps, and embraces representatives from every Southern State. As a Southern institution it has, we think, peculiar claims upon the South.

Among the crowd was a gentleman, dark, handsome, and mysterious, a total stranger to every one; whether a Duke *incognito* or Louis Napoleon's head cook, remains a problem. This individual excites a great curiosity here. The ladies lend a vigilant ear, to ascertain whether any sound resembling "your Grace" or "your Lordship" escapes his servant's lips in addressing the distinguished-looking *incog.*;

but nothing transpires, and we are still at liberty to believe him a royal highness if we choose. His herculean figure, menacing brow, and bronze skin, cast in metal, and fixed in a gallery, would make an incomparable gladiatorial statue.



XLV.

SCENE IN THE PARLOR AFTER BREAKFAST—MR. COLWELL.

GREENBRIER, JULY, 1857.

THE aspect of this watering-place, after dinner, is anything but lively. The whole place seems to become torpid. After dinner conversation is drowsy enough to drive even the House of Representatives to repose. Attempts at wit seem solemn as the minute-guns at a military funeral. The voices of those who are so brilliant in the morning, now have a drowsy, muffled sound, with colons and semicolons in every sentence. Dinner seems a sort of isthmus, uniting the freshness and brilliancy of the morning with the gayety of the evening—a rusty grappling-iron between the two.

Life here is never more vividly seen than in the parlors, to which the visitors in crowds adjourn immediately after breakfast. We paid our first visit to these rooms this morning, where we found a crowd

assembled, and the hum of general conversation established in an extensive circle.

From our station behind the expansive skirts of a lady, we will, dear reader, give you a peep at the different groups.

Two stately figures were stationed in prominent dignity near the window, who seemed as mutually engrossed as the partners of a banking house on their annual settling day.

In the most obscure chair of the most occult corner of the room, a gentleman was beguiling the time and aiding his digestion with a copy of "*Russell's Magazine*;" and a very potent "*chasse-café*" it is, that collection of pungent condiments. For if its tessellated pages, variegated with polished fragments of poetry, essays, sonnets, criticisms, and reviews, fail to produce a brilliant mosaic, where, in the name of printer's ink, is entertainment to be found?

On the portico, near the parlor window, Mr. —, calm, gentlemanly, and grave of habit as a court-physician, had sheltered himself behind the main sheet of the "*Herald*." We could not help wondering, however, by what catoptrical process he could manage to decipher its mysteries in a reversed position. He was probably ruminating behind the inverted newspaper on the disasters of his destiny. This gentleman has three rivals in his approach to Miss — (excuse the initials) to contend with, and he was probably reflecting whether he should attack the

triumvirate singly, by a demand for explanation, or by wager of battle; being aware that to subdue three enemies at once, even with the best of Colt's pistols, is a feat only compassable by some dueling wonder.

In another direction a young mother was recommending genuine Welsh flannel to make woollen cuirasses for baby-wear in the mountains, showing how she could wad it into breastplates with her own hand.

Near by a group of gentlemen were discussing the recent sale of the "White Sulphur," change of management, etc. *Apròpos* of the late principal, (Mr. Wm. Colwell,) seldom has any one retiring from a responsible position carried more earnest and heartfelt wishes for their future success and happiness. There are scores of invalids throughout our country who have been enabled by the noble liberality of this gentleman to derive infinite benefit from the use of these world-famed waters, which but for his generosity they would never have been able to avail themselves of. He carries into retirement the gratitude and kind wishes of hundreds, for wherever such a character is found it brings unlimited respect and honor.

On a sofa near us a group of ladies were discussing and commenting on the genealogy of an absent friend! What a caustic pleasantry! Never was there such candid biographers. Since Moore's Life of Sheridan, never was friend so impartially dealt with. And yet, if the absent one should have entered unexpectedly, the fair anatomists would, we

doubt not, indulge in the expansive action of a "German comedy," and fold her to their hearts.

What would the squatters in the prairies, repining after intercourse with their kind—what would the wanderers in Australia—what would the solitary English Rajah say to the uncharitable and unchristian feelings evinced by this knot of ladies, who, instead of loving one another each as herself—instead of doing to each other as they would be done by, were thus indulging in harsh and unkind remarks of the absent?

"How dare you let your voice
Talk out of tune so with the voice of God?
Thou dost profane the loveliest light and air
God ever gave; be still, and look and listen!
Forego that tone, made harsh by a cold heart,
And hearken, if you're not afraid to hearken,
Yon robin's careless carol, glad and sweet,
Mocking the sunshine with his merry trill.
Suppose you try to chord your voice with his;
But first learn love and wisdom of him, lady—
Learn the lesson that you need—*the law of love!*"

In a standing position in the hall a couple of gentlemen were discussing a recent failure in New York, talking of the affair as coolly as they would have done of some embarrassed railway line, declaring that nothing better than insolvency was to have been expected of a poor, inert, yea-nay hypochondriac, governed by his clerks, and shuddering at the sight of an account book.

XLVI.

RAINY DAY AT THE WHITE SULPHUR.

GREENBRIER, JULY, 1857.

THE weather, for the last day or two, has been as fickle as a coquette, and the barometer in a perpetual state of perplexity.

More than a week ago we had projected a pedestrian excursion to the mountains on this day, but the morning opened with one of those steady, perpendicular rains, which we felt persuaded would go drizzle—drizzle—through the day. Without, everything was dim, misty, and cheerless. The very birds sat moping in grim despondency on the boughs. About nine o'clock, there seemed a sort of disposition in the sky to clear, and there was for a moment a sunburst; but it was transient, for in an hour the sky was again overcast, and a heavy fog rose up like the Arabian Genii from the sea, accompanied by another indefatigable shower, just as if some spiteful fiend was wringing a wet blanket in the air. The rain continued for an hour or two, driving against the windows as strenuously as if discharging a duty; and during the whole day the weather was as perseveringly disagreeable as if priding itself on its ill-doing.

Most reluctantly we abandoned our intention and retired to the parlor, where we found a crowd trying to kill or get rid of the enemy—time. In the mid-

dle of one of the rooms a centre-table stood out ehill and prominent, eleared of all feminine litter, while some of the rebellious visitors, for want of more elevating amusement, had eongregated around it for a game of whist. Groups of twos and fours were wandering up and down the rooms, looking as forlorn and purposeless as our first parents after the fall. By one of the windows stood a young girl, her little fair hands erossed one over the other, gazing out mournfully at the petulant rain as it sang against the panes and elung to the frame-work of the window.

But the eynosure of all eyes, the nucleus round which all gathered, was the newly-arrived bride from Louisville, Kentucky, sister of Mr. Matt Ward, of that eity, who is among the guests. Quite a crowd had gathered round the new-eomer, for a nearer inspeetion of that whieh is hailed with such joy in the dead calm of fashionable life here—a new faee.

We don't believe Tommy Moore found anything fairer, when he went angel-hunting under the shade of the sumachs, than the picturelike faee of this ehild-bride. She is evidently just from sehool, for the expression is bright with the early flush of youth, sueh as seldom survives the vigils of a single season. Although her exquisite loveliness of feature is sueh as to throw the pretensions of others into the shade, yet her disposition seems so gentle, her *naïveté* so eaptivating, that it would be impossible to eherish one jealous feeling against her. To our mind, the

chief charm of this bride is the shy, sweet tenderness, that seems to rest upon her face. Her diamonds and *Point d'Alençon* would have rejoiced the courtly pencil of Vandyke.

As our eye glanced around it fell upon Mr. —, of Mississippi. This gentleman is one moment addressing halting sonnets to an idolized edition of one of his friend's lovely sisters; the next pledging himself heart and soul to Miss —, who has appropriate predilections of her own; the next, suffering his eyes to be dazzled with Miss —, and still, dear reader, he is all this time keeping the bloom upon his heart as sacred as a head-gardener on his bunches of hot-house grapes; and he will be ready, on coming of age, to offer an unmortgaged hand, heart, and estate to some heiress who will double his fortune.

There is a phase of married life in the "fashionable world" which we cannot understand. The parties seem to have no share in the apportionment of each other's existence. In the fashionable world all seem privileged to follow a "married lady." Very young men dangle after her from room to room, gentlemen with income, and those with no income at all, consider themselves at liberty to enjoy the delightful privilege of seeking her mantle among those miscellaneous heaps of female habiliments which the necessities of our climate nightly amass at the White Sulphur ball-room. All this strikes us as singular; for we have been "brought up" with the rather

quaint idea that a wife should laugh with her husband, cry with him, sell the shoes off her feet for him, and then walk barefoot to earn more, for his sake.

But perhaps it is best as it is in the gay world, for, were these fashionable couples compelled to run in harness together, an upset would be inevitable.

Mrs. —, of Washington, is here. Every one seems anxious to receive the law from her lips on all points of fashionable etiquette. Her influence in society is remarkable. Were she to appear attired in a tunic and zone, the ranks of fashion would swarm with Cordelias and Agrippinas. Were she to discover an eighth deadly sin in the vulgarity of robust health, chicken broth would suffice *pour tout potage*. Should she favor the fine arts, throngs of upper-tendom would bid for pictures they did not want and statues they did not appreciate.

XLVII.

FLIRTATION IN THE PARLOR.

GREENBRIER, JULY, 1857.

SOME of our male flirts here are pursuing this amusement with great vigor. Some carry it on to desperation for a fortnight, and then leave for the *Sweet*; others, on the expected eve of a declaration, fly off on the summon of a new beauty at the *Salt*,

showing plainly that of all birds, birds of passage are the most difficult to bring down. Some few may be waiting for the familiar facilities of *Lover's Walk* to hazard their proposals; but most of them are on the *qui vive* for self-defence.

We introduce to our readers a couple in the ball-room. The lady seems so thoroughly self-engrossed, that she is making a tremendous rent in her "Brussel's Point" with the inerusted stieks of a fan, which she is agitating with uncommon vehemence. She has entered the lists of a fashionable life unguarded by any precocious philosophy; inclined to believe that words are things, that those who speak her fairly mean her kindly. Her companion is really an amateur in his vocation, one who travels merely to get rid of himself and his time, and thinks both one and the other well bestowed on the lovely girl at his side. He is neglecting no occasion of seeking her society, and yet the moths flitting in the twilight, and the bees hovering their golden way back to the hive, are not lighter on the wing. This fair girl is left wholly to her own guidance; her father, absorbed by other matters, does not apply his observation to sublunary things sufficiently to perceive that his daughter is in danger of losing her heart; and her mild mother looks on with as vague and incurious an eye as if she was only a painted representation of a mother. Her presence appears to form no restraint on their intercourse. She seems

to see or hear no more of their proceedings than the idle wind that blows.

All this is fraught with peril to one of the parties. We will spare our readers the "twilight," the "Lover's Walk," and the "flirtation parlor," and all the poetry of the case, and bring them to the *results*. As the season draws to a close, even the fair girl herself will think it strange that he is not her "declared lover." As the time for separation approaches, he will speak of the misery of leaving her, as though a journey home was an Arctic expedition, and himself the most wretched of victims, in being forced to leave when his whole soul will remain riveted at the "Springs." In the faintest and tenderest of whispers he will say all that is usually said by young gentlemen at liberty to be desperately in love, but not quite at liberty to make an offer of their hand. When the time for departure arrives, her hand will be taken with an intensity of pressure; he may even touch her cheek with his lips for the first, last, and only time; and then—the flattery she has found so irresistible will address itself to other ears; the smiles which have enthralled her will win some other heart.

She will go back to her home with as many new thoughts and feelings, struggling in her heart and brain, as beset a young scholar digesting his first perusal of Homer. She imagined she was only interested and understood, while, in truth, she has in

some degree ceased to understand herself; and where she believed she was merely passing an idle hour pleasantly, she has unconsciously created a moral aliment necessary to her after-existence. Her home will look chill and desolate. She will indulge in those fire-gazing reveries which are supposed to discover towns and cities in the burning coals. Oh, what dreams will arise before the mild gray eyes, strained as if to examine the glowing embers—dreams of this scene, with its quivering beech-trees and glassy spring, and he who is now by her side will pilot their way! She may appear in society in fine spirits, but a penetrating eye will discover an unnatural flurry in all the animation. To forget the past she will commence an elaborate piece of embroidery, refresh her eyes with currents of air, and rehearse little hysterical laughs, as trials of self-possession. The reader will perhaps say “Disdain him—forget him—love another,”—as if the affections were resumable at will.

In a short time her health will begin to fail; a physician will be called in; he knows nothing of the antecedents; the patient does not confide to him the details of the past; not a syllable is breathed of the simulated affection which awoke happiness in her heart. With a few vague murmurings of “languid state of the circulation,” “enfeebled condition of the constitution,” he will inflict powders in unopened little triangular paper parcels, and then

take his leave, promising to return in a day or two. Time passes, and then comes the hearse and the grave—and the curtain falls!

Reader, the picture we have drawn is no fiction. We have only to consult the recesses of our memory to recall the wasting figure of one over whom the grave has closed forever. The obituary record pronounced it a “rapid decline.” There were two survivors who were familiar with the true cause of that early death—he who had so wantonly trifled with the holiest feelings of our nature, and she whose gliding pen traces these words.

It is probably a sin of ignorance or stupidity on our part; but we honestly admit that we never look upon these *flirtations* without the same breath-suspending feeling with which we look upon a conjuror capering among eggs.

XLVIII.

GUESTS' DAGUERRETYPE—FANCY BALL.

GREENBRIER, AUGUST, 1857.

TWELVE hundred persons are now said to be on the ground and around the “White Sulphur,” waiting for admission. Among these may be found gentlemen distinguished by titles so innumerable that to determine their identity were as difficult as to resolve

which is the true Farina and *eau-thentic* at Cologne. We have men who are enjoying a respite from law, legalists fresh from the perusal of jagged and business-like documents—men whose lives are passed in relieving those who are entangled in meshes of red tape, the most fatal net perhaps that can entangle poor human nature.

We have some few editors, who have flung their over-worked pens into the fire, and for a week or two are their own masters, eating their rolls and sipping their Bohea without dyspeptic haste. We have Cœlebs in search of well-jointed widows; and clergymen looking as if they had not a thought beyond the souls intrusted to their care—men with all the graces of Christianity.

We have wild, picturesque-looking men—followers of the sea, in the shape of handsome young navy officers, who coolly recount adventures as supernatural as those of Gulliver, speaking like young Nelsons of the savage countries they have visited. We have male flirts—brilliant, but heartless—men who seem to possess no heart of their own, and fancy that the feelings of others, like their own, are merely assumed for show.

We have some few parents who live in a ferment of *finesse* for their children's matrimonial advancement, passing their days in devising schemes of hyemial speculation.

We have beautiful children—mamma's darlings—

Cupids, *minus* the wings—whose carol is now audible from our gallery without; little sun-burnt faces, looking like ripe hazel-nuts in a tawny husk—dear, darling little urchins, who lack only tambourines and triangles to resemble the ragged Savoyards of the Washington streets that are occasionally relieved with sixpences. This indiscreet allusion may produce a hurricane of maternal indignation, but were we to recount the personal feats of these little wanderers, the credulous age we live in would laugh us to scorn.

We have heiresses—(a word in your ear, dear reader; the writer is, we think, the only portionless lady on the grounds)—with slate quarries, and the mountains where all the famous mutton comes from, for their dowry.

We have very wealthy families, moving through life on easy chairs with golden castors—fortunate individuals who have only to open their mouth to yawn, and it is filled with manna and quails! We have others with large fortunes—not fortunes lazily transmitted from sire to son, by hands too inert to do more than clench their hereditary havings—but fortunes worked for with the hands, and worked for with the head.

We have brides and grooms, in whose countenances as much conjugal happiness is concentrated as ever brightened the looks of man, from the days when Adam was content to pick posies and to listen to nightingales in company with Eve; and a few “par-

venus," profiting by the universal *mêlée* of watering-place life, to steal edgewise into society.

And we have here a disciple of *Daguerre*; indeed, we have just been enduring what all will admit is a trial of human patience, undergoing the martyrdom of full dress at three o'clock, on a thrilling day, to give a sitting for a friend.

Imagine us, dear readers, actually seated in a "daguerreotype gallery," at the White Sulphur; our shoulders enveloped in a white web whose consistency might serve, on an exigency, for a table-cloth, but which calls itself "Chantilly lace;" in our hand a volume of one of Dickens's touching novels; by our side a bouquet of very drooping wood-flowers, and behind our hapless head an invisible iron band. Thus we sit to be examined by the curious eye of art, with the full glare of a beaming sun in our face, and our merciless friend fidgiting up and down, tormenting the artist with advice and ourself with comments, which we dare not derange our features by answering with proper spirit. Thus primly adjusted, they declare we look the very picture of voluptuous indolence. Alas! the ease of our position is wholly extrinsic! Our head appears encircled by one of the compressive engines of the Inquisition, and, had we swallowed a saucer of pickles, our feelings could not have been more acidulated against all mankind. We hope we shall be sympathized with as the case deserves.

To add to our troubles, a “fancy ball” is anticipated, and we have been forced to listen to an eager discussion on the comparative merits of a Vandyke costume—a Rembrantized pelisse—an ærial vesture of clouds—a Medora, a Peri, a Zingari—an Albanian peasant, and a Polish princess, which left us doubly perplexed by the multifarious suggestions of each.

XLIX.

DRESS BALL—MISS K.—LIEUT. MAURY.

WHITE SULPHUR, AUGUST, 1857.

THE “Dress Ball” of last evening presented a brilliant crowd of both sexes. There were portly, elderly gentlemen in the glossiest of broadcloths and massive watch-seals; fair women, radiant in smiles and diamonds; in short, there was a fashionable crowd in most of the paraphernalia of their order. Among the gentlemen, beards of every cut, color, and proportion might be seen; from the Oriental to the Henry Quatre, from the timidly-cultivated exotic-looking mustache of the student to the foreign minister.

Our chief employment was derived from the study of the various physiognomies which the room presented, the assortment comprising as it did a sprinkling of all the Southern States.

Among the ladies was a lovely girl from Natchez, (Miss E.) with a cluster of delicate wood-flowers drooping over her ear, the flowers light and faintly tinted, just like those which every one who loves the woods knows and admires. Her face has an expression such as Guido has shed on the seraphic features of his saints. This fair girl belongs to one of those moss and lichen-grown families whose family-leek is rooted in soil antediluvian.

There were also two others from Mississippi, sisters, who were prominent among the beauties of the evening. The face of one of the two, who has just emerged from the Patapsco Institute, Hiram Powers might have taken as a model for that of his celebrated "Greek Slave."

There was also a lively, good-humored, dancing, chatting girl, Miss K., from Louisville, Kentucky, who seems eminent for that species of lively *naïveté* which the old and ugly generally translate into coquetry. These last would say probably that she is a bushel of chaff and a single grain of corn; but we venture to assert that this grain is worth its weight in diamond dust.

There was an elegant-looking woman from "Rose Bank," Yazoo River, Mississippi, one of the many charming widows who stand among the most attractive of their sex here. A host of admirers seem to have constituted themselves collector-general to supply her with daily tributes of worship and praise.

We think, however, she is quite indifferent to this echoed applause of society, brought back by these carrier-doves, who never fail to appear before her with an olive-branch in their mouths. Though possessed of a large fortune, she is said to exercise a most benevolent and noble generosity in the disposition of her wealth.

Lieutenant Maury, of Washington City, is among the lately-arrived visitors. This gentleman harmonizes antagonistic winds, searches into the very tides of the ocean, gives the poor mariner power over the heaving billows, harnessing the wild waves, and giving the ship a soul that she may pass safely through the awful perils of the sea.

“Love affairs” are in a state of progression. Some few are wearing willow-garlands as long as Ophelia’s. One or two, it is whispered, have been jilted by heiresses. These last deserve pity, when they lose the estate that dove-tailed so nicely into their own!

L.

BALL-ROOM—MARRIED LADIES.

GREENBRIER, AUGUST, 1857.

EVERY person familiar with the expedients to which the stage has recourse to revive the dramatic taste of our country—too active to be easily excited by theatrical exhibitions—must be familiar

with a sort of false vivacity, called by Mrs. Ritchie "stage bustle," in which, at the flattest point of a play, the *dramatis personæ* make a prodigious fuss about nothing, in order to keep the spectator on the *qui vive* by their *liveliness*. Now, there is a moment of the watering-place season when ladies and gentlemen get up the same sort of factitious animation. Then begin tableaux and fancy balls and excursions to adjoining springs, and dinners at the "Sweet." The fashion of the season seems in favor of the latter, and people drive to the "Sweet" in dusty weather in order to meet the same people whose tediousness wearied them at the "White," and eat a dinner very little better than the one they leave.

A fancy ball is to come off in a few days at the "Sweet," and the thermometer of feminine vanity is rising even to fever-heat. Trunks are emptied, and blondes, illusions, and *moire antiques* are successively exhibited, the fair owners deeply involved in deciding which is necessary to make themselves overpowering; boxes are opened to try the effect of pearls, rubies, and diamonds, upon the rich fabrics between which their choice is undecided.

Our dress ball of last evening was graced by the presence of three late arrivals, whose Vivian-Greyish air of high refinement and finished manners indicate habitual intercourse with the most cultivated circles, a handsome young widower, Col. L., of Mobile, and Messrs. L. and F., young planters of Columbus,

Mississippi. Mobile and Columbus may be proud of such representatives. The triumvirate have already reduced to gravity the laughing countenance of more than one lovely girl.

Among the crowd of ladies was one, with an exquisite necklace of Mosaics, who was surrounded by some dozen gentlemen in the intervals of the dancing. She appeared to take very little notice of any of them, her eye occasionally peeping over her shoulders to see that the ringlets were doing no discredit to their dainty resting-place. One of the number placed himself before her, and was rewarded by a calm, languid smile of notice; he claimed her hand for the next quadrille, for the ensuing waltz, and was refused with polite equivocation upon every renewed attempt.

People here are compelled to seize upon very extraordinary moments for their confidences and declarations. In Andalusia the soft confession would be murmured to a guitar accompaniment; or, in the land of Burns, piped forth in "pastoral song." But amid the sophistication of a fashionable watering-place a vast deal of love is necessarily made in public. Proposals are sometimes tendered during the dismemberment of a chicken wing, and sentimental confidences uttered while the head musician is screwing up his violin.

During the course of the evening we noticed the graceful figures of two or three married ladies whirl-

ing round the room, flying through the maze of waltzers, in the centre of a ring of admiring spectators. We should think that gentlemen endowed with that nervous susceptibility of body and soul which the ill-natured designate by the name of jealousy—we should think that nothing could be more trying to husbands afflicted with this distemper, than to see such encroachments on their privileges. What a trial of sensibility when the dance is a waltz, the husband an Othello, and the lucky partner a gentleman of no ordinary attractions! As the leader of the band swelled his concluding minim, and the violinist's chin rested on his key-note, we observed the countenance of one of these husbands lowering with tornados of conjugal indignation.

For ourselves we could see all gallants to married ladies, either in general or particular,—we could see the whole race drowned in milk of roses without a pang. We cannot understand the sort of apathetic etiquette that exists among people who vow, at the altar, to become one flesh, one heart, one soul, for richer for poorer, for better for worse.

LI.

SCENE IN THE PARLOR—MR. PICKENS.

GREENBRIER, AUGUST, 1857.

AGAIN, dear reader, we summon you to the parlor as arbitrarily as if subpœnaed by the Court of Chancery.

The guests have adjourned there in crowds, having no further occupation, after breakfast, but a tooth-pick, to interfere with their social propensities. In the hall, surrounded by gentlemen, stands Miss Florida R——, a celebrated belle from Madison, Mississippi, a lady who seems to unite feminine gentleness with airy elegance. Her complexion exhibits a degree of fairness such as a carper might denounce as insipid. But the total absence of color serves only to enhance the beauty of her large gazellelike eyes, fringed with exuberant lashes; and the full redness of a mouth of such exquisite proportions that one could wish it ever closed but for the pearls disclosed by its slightest discomposure. As we look upon her spotless beauty we think of the words of the old madrigal:—

“Have you seen but a white lily blow
Before rude hands have clutch’d it?
Have you seen but the fall of the snow
Before the soil hath smutch’d it?”

There is a fossil specimen of the sterner sex who has left her side and retired to the portico, pulled

his shapeless felt hat over his face, and is describing eircles and all manner of geometrical problems with the point of his well-varnished shoe upon the floor, with an evident determination to be silent and miserable. It is whispered that this gentleman is an aspirant for this lady's hand. If she would depute us as plenipotentiary, we think we could explain to him the impossibility of her ever requiting his regard. This charming girl pleads guilty to the soft impeachment of choosing to marry for love, preferring a crust of bread and happiness to fortune and the inevitable retribution which deservedly follows a mereenary marriage. Poor man! like a newly-caught bird, his restlessness is painful to behold.

The fair girl at her side, from Iberville, La., is just emancipated from the school-room, and, like other creatures tamed by long confinement, she seems puzzled on emerging from her cage to determine what road to take. Some birds build in the loftiest trees, others on the ground; this sweet girl will prefer the lowly nest.

The lady in conversation with the member from South Carolina is the only child of the Senator from Georgia. She is as unpretending in deportment as becomes her high, worldly position, and seems to retain her appropriate position in the world without assuming its livery or forfeiting the better attributes of her nature.

The lady passing through the rooms, with her silk dress rustling like a plantation of aspens, is Mrs. —, who has a weakness for everything foreign. It is said that this amiable trait led her, on one occasion, to introduce the refuse of a Leipsic fair in Germany into the first society in —, merely because they happened to have an unpronounceable name and to eat snails and sour kroust without wincing.

The gentleman who is lounging through the rooms with such easy *nonchalance* is Mr. —. Dandy is too vulgar a term to apply to this individual; he is an exquisite *du supreme bon ton*, and his gold guard-chain—nearly the size of a “Collar of the Garter”—enamelled studs, jeweled pin, and the perfume exuding from his clothes, avouch him an exquisite of the first water.

We have all heard that when the royal graves were opened, during the French Revolution, the body of St. Mequin was recognized by the Italian perfumes which it still emitted; and, we are persuaded, that the mummy of this gentleman, after two centuries interment, will give out an effluvia of *patchouli*. As he passes, the gentlemen exchange certain impolite aspirations for his transfer to some unrecordable spot; but we, dear reader, silently wish him in a better place.

There is existing between some of our belles here a sort of incipient feud, which, in former times,

would have exploded into a Capulet and Montagu antagonism. Their antipathy has its origin, however, only in those petty rivalries which originate the troubles of so many who lay claims to belleship. One lovely girl has been condemned, executed, and given over by a jury of her fashionable friends, for being guilty of wearing a Berthe of *Guipure* lace, with sleeves of "*Point d'Alençon*."

Another has shared the same fate for displaying the cloven-foot of the pedant, though the forewoman of the jury affects to weep while she delivers the impartial verdict!

The Hon. F. W. Pickens, of South Carolina, is among the late arrivals. His high personal character and fine abilities seem to point him out as one eminently calculated to fill the high position recently tendered him by Mr. Buchanan, of Ambassador to Russia.

We have also Dr. Bryant, of Warren, Mississippi, a gentleman of influence in his own State, and one of the recently-appointed delegates to the "West Point" examination of Cadets.

Miss G., the very charming daughter of a physician, from Madison, Mississippi, attracts much admiration here. To converse with this very intelligent person is like turning up a furrow of virgin soil in all its native richness—her ideas are so sensible, her perception so clear on every subject. She seems to think and feel so justly that it is a pleasure

to afford her novel themes for thought and feeling. It is neither her beauty, grace, nor talent that is her charm; it is all these combined, with a total absence of selfishness, and a consideration for the feelings and happiness of all around her.

We have also the accomplished ex-Secretary of War, Mr. Conrad, of New Orleans, with his very promising son, a youth of seventeen.

LII.

COUNT SARTIGES—JUDGE WAYNE.

GREENBRIER, AUGUST, 1857.

THE sun shines out brightly upon legions of well-dressed people and well-dressed horses. All the Greenbrier world is laughing, chatting, dancing, and singing themselves giddy. Here, remote from the gay world, in this Paradise of Nature, one would think our gay belles would lose their taste for the glare of the ball-room and the stirring tones of the orchestra.

But balls succeed each other like tempting courses at the banquet of life. The great old-fashioned thing called society is here broken up into sets and coteries.

Some laugh away their time, seeming to think that mirth is the highest intellectual faculty.

Life here, with others, consists in sleeping away one-half the twenty-four hours. These last seem to agree with the Gascon, who, when told that the *Seine* was a river that never left its bed, replied, "*voila une riviere qui sai vivre.*" The *Seine* knows what it is about.

Some pass their time in visiting, rushing from cottage to cottage, leaving square bits of pasteboard. Imagine, dear readers, visiting cards at the White Sulphur! Robinson Crusoe's dismay at seeing the print of the man's feet in the sand could have been nothing, absolutely nothing, to ours, when these evil tokens of Washington life first met our distracted sight.

We have here all grades and classes of society. Fractions of the legislation, and business men; chairmen of thriving railway companies, and shareholders of a dozen others. We have representatives of England and France; those two great countries predestined never to be one, since their union, like that of some other couples, is productive of brawls and quarreling, kissing and making it up again, only to recommence the squabble.

We have also foreign ambassadors. Count Sartiges, the French Minister, is among the crowd, pronounced by the late Mr. Marcy to be a concentration of diplomatic tact; indeed, it is said that with this distinguished gentleman the Decalogue is superseded

by an eleventh commandment of "Thou shalt not be found out."

We have also the expressive face and light mustache of Mr. Stackal, Ambassador from that huge domain which incloses in one empire the bones of the Siberian Mammoth, and the valleys of Circassian flowers. This great country met the sad reverse of the destruction of Sebastopol with the delicate tact with which Napoleon's bulletins converted the retreat from Moscow into a triumph. These distinguished personages are said to be Talleyrands in their profession, possessing so much of the necessary *sang froid* that they would betray no surprise on suddenly finding themselves nose to trunk with an elephant.

We have also one of the blood royal here, fresh from Paris and the roar of his cousin's imperial cannon,—Mr. Jerome Bonaparte,—one who, if he chooses, can describe the cut of Louis Napoleon's mustaches and epaulets.

We have Judge Wayne, of the Supreme Court, who passes along in dignified abstraction, looking like a portrait of St. Jerome, by the tender pencil of Guido.

We have also gentlemen who are elevated on pedestals in political life, which requires them to be studious of their attitudes. Senator Slidell, with his charming lady, is here.

LIII.

LOVE SCENE IN THE PARLOR.

GREENBRIER, JULY, 1857.

CUPID is fluttering his wings here. Our hand trembles, dear reader, while we relate the shocking fact, that the sighs of the lovers alone, if collected, might turn a mill. There are, too, some few *great matches*, unique in point of settlement, where the lovers' talk is of railway shares and securities, where their *billet-doux* might be interchanged by the electric trelegraph with perfect propriety—couples with whom wedlock seems a business to be transacted.

At the quiet hour of four o'clock yesterday—an hour when the ladies are secluded as strictly as nuns of any sisterhood in Spain, and the gentlemen, nighed in arm-chairs, are enjoying that species of chaotic mental vagary in which they are apt to indulge after a bottle of choice claret—we sauntered to the parlor, hoping to enjoy, in the cozy music-room, a quiet hour with *Tennyson's Maud*. We were not, however, allowed undisturbed possession of the rooms, for a couple were seated in the opposite parlor, where we could command a view of them, conversing in tones which would not have drowned the morning hymn of a bumble-bee. We opened the embossed red morocco doors, and bent over the mystic black and white furniture, as if, like a somnambulist in a

state of *clairvoyance*, we could read with our eyes shut. But notwithstanding our seeming pre-occupation, our attention was sufficiently disengaged to note that, though the lady's eyes rested on her work, and the seam she was sewing exhibited the most patternlike evenness of workmanship, her manner and appearance had that flushed tremor of perfect felicity with which our sex listen to the assurance that they are angels. She seemed a far more eloquent listener than talker; her varying complexion affording answer enough to her companion.

As we peeped slyly over the volume, we observed the gentleman take up a pair of scissors and begin to clip off minute sections of the embroidery which he had unconsciously withdrawn from her work-box. At this juncture the elaborate clipper looked as auspiciously sheepish as any victim destined to surrender its fleece at the next farmers' spring meeting. The lady plied her needle with redoubled and almost angry rapidity, and as her companion made a tremendous abbreviation of the embroidery, her complexion varied no longer, but became permanent crimson.

It was plainly evident that this couple were sharing together a dream of first attachment, which leaves the remainder of life a blank. The sands in their hour-glass are all of gold; the White Sulphur to them a Paradise. The summer of 1857 will be to this sweet girl a memorable summer, long afterwards

noted permanently in her calendar. That parlor will be sacred in her eyes, and she will recur to it amid the hard realities as a mirage of her heart's *first love*. Alas! Death's skeleton finger may even now be pointed at the form by her side. That dark sovereign of a dark hour may break in upon her vision of happiness. For long desolate years these hours may live in her memory, and after time has subdued her grief, she may still tell what flowers were in bloom the summer she passed here, what fragrance of sweetness was in the air, what an exulting song of birds in the skies. In after-life the White Sulphur, with its velvet lawn and climbing vines, may be in her heart a "mortuary chamber" into which she may retreat at will; an elysium whose fruit and flowers exhibit perpetual spring, although death may have created winter elsewhere. She may recall those rambling walks, those horseback drives; she may hear again the muffled tramp of the horses on the green grass, the ingratiating whisper breathed in her ear, and the blue sky bending over all. And yet the world, dear reader, calls this "sentimental;" the world—hard, rational, matter-of-fact, debating, legislating—will, perhaps, read it in a tone of derision and mockery.

LIV.

VISIT TO THE RED SWEET.

RED SWEET SPRINGS, AUGUST, 1857.

To visit the "White Sulphur" without passing some time at the *Sweet-Springs*, which are seventeen miles distant from the former, would be an omission tantamount to the tragedy of Hamlet being announced for representation with the part of Hamlet to be left out.

We, in accordance with the wishes of our party, made arrangements, and left the "White" at an early hour, while the fashionable world were under canopies of chintz and dimity, and the menial world of the kitchen cabinet preparing breakfast. It was a charming morning, the air still fresh with night dews, and though the daylight was broad upon the hills, it crept more slowly down through the bushy slopes of the rocks and the tangled brakes of the valley. The road was not one of your broad, dusty, glaring causeways, but a zigzag, up-and-down by-road, always surprising you with some new picturesque peep at every turn. We passed through the thick woods, full of giant trees, lifting their arms wide to heaven, their tufted tops spreading in thick canopies overhead. The sweet breeze of a summer morning sent a low, murmuring sound among the trees, which seemed to nod their heads, and whisper and rustle

their thick leaves. It seemed like the dying away of distant anthems. It was like moving through the vast aisles of some Gothic cathedral.

After a delightful drive of some five hours, we reached the modest, charming, pastoral "Red Sweet," imbedded in vines and leaves of clustering green. There is an air about this place which makes us think of the beautiful old times when they knew how to build cottages as well as cathedrals. The whole establishment is a very jewel of irregularity, matted over with vines in one place, ivied in another, and altogether surrounded with a wilderness of laurels, chestnuts, oaks, and vines. It is just the sort of pastoral-looking place which youthful couples, newly united by a clergyman, would vow they prefer a thousand times to any mansion in the land. The world-worn politician, in the height of his cares and reputation, might doubt whether he would not have a happier lot as the tenant of so sweet an abode.

The spring attached to this establishment is said to be the finest chalybeate in this country, if not in the world. It is plainly indicated by the redness of the earth which surrounds it, caused by the deposition of the copious solution of iron with which it is charged. From under the jagged edges of a huge rock arise a thousand sparkling bubbles, so that it looks like a rivulet of effervescent wine. It seems to issue out of the dull, porous rocks, painted over thick with a red deposit of iron oxyd. The

taste of the water is of a saline flavor, but quite palatable. We can well imagine this spring to be one of the full-charged subterranean arteries, out of which issue numberless veins that bear through sinuous crevices in the rock the waters of the various mineral springs that are found so abundantly here.

We shall not attempt, dear reader, to reproduce the scene that met our eye as we entered the beautiful lawn that surrounds it, like a carpet of green. At one point we came upon a group of happy children, whose light-hearted laughter rang out upon the air in merry music; at another we stumbled upon a group of gentlemen, clustered round a table, manœuvring their little dotted black and white dominos with wonderful skill. On one of the galleries a party of lads were lying on the benches, their game-bags tossed wearily at their feet; while on an upper story stand a bevy of ebony-cheeked nurses, holding in their arms the children of some doting mothers, whose golden hair and lily skin formed a striking contrast to their sable companions. And the dinner to which we were invited! Apicius himself could not have desired more delicious fare.

Our window looks to the mountain, and thus kindly inclosed with green leaves we write. And the air! Those only who leave the hot terraces and singed walls of a city, can worthily panegyrize the crystal transparency, the elastic lightness in the atmosphere, which renders the act of inhaling it an absolute en-

joyment. We have the sunny warmth of summer, without its oppressiveness. Dear readers, you whose ears are wearied with the coarse din of business thoroughfares and your eyes aching with the glare of brick walls, oh that you could glance at the view from our window as we write! By it you would learn that God liveth not alone in history, but in nature; that he speaketh not alone in inspiration, but audibly; that he is not the God of the dead, but of the living. It is indeed a Paradise which causes most people to lament that during their sojourn their five senses cannot be multiplied by two.

LV.

SCENE AT THE RED SWEET.

RED SWEET SPRINGS, AUGUST, 1857.

WE have bid farewell to the whirl and tumult of life at the White Sulphur, and have anchored down for a few days at the rural Paradise of Virginia watering-places—the “Red Sweet Springs.”

We feel luxuriously disposed to writing; everything around contributes to this feeling. It is a golden morning, and the sun is streaming through the green vines by which our gallery is shaded. These entangled streamers seem to struggle across and peep in at the window as if in search of something

kindred with themselves. It is one of those lovely, April-like days which, at the *Red Sweet*, is so apt to deceive one into the belief that there are two *springs* in a year,—just as the beaming influence of a pair of blue eyes occasionally creates a similar delusion in the heart of a superannuated beau. The air, free from the dust-floating particles and exhalations of the city, is perfectly transparent, and before our window wave the leaves of a veteran of the forest, while the birds from its branches are treating us to their liquid whistles. Indeed, the birds seem to be holding a congress in this old tree, intent only upon themselves, not caring for the fate of their old friend, that has borne their weight from the period of its green beauty until now. There is a moral under this which might be applied to modern politicians.

One of the orators has just left the old tree, probably in disgust; he means of course to appeal to his constituents in the farther woods, and *define his position*.

Dear reader, oh that every child in your pent-up streets could be bathed by this delicious breeze! The air kisses our cheek, and lays its soft finger on our forehead, and leaves a touch of balm not only upon our lips, but upon our heart.

In front of us a lawn, enameled with a rich coating of verdure, is rolled out like a carpet. Beyond the lawn, and extending farther into the plantation, are fields containing cattle, reposing, feeding, or

standing in social clusters. But there is a romantic waterfall near the bath-houses that has some special and peculiar merits, which must not be omitted. It is pre-eminently musical, pouring out its soul in one perpetual anthem by day and by night. The rocky ledge over which it flows is of varying height and size, and so scientifically adapted that it is prepared, at all seasons and in every state of the weather, to give concerts, with a full orchestra, to whoever may choose to listen. It evidently possesses great skill in its art; for, though it performs its part in all sorts of time, there is perfect harmony in the swelling whole. The song of this waterfall is our welcome in the morning and our lullaby at night. It chimes in with our thoughts of home and dreams of slumber; it is a sort of pleasant ground to the entire picture of life here.

From twelve to two is the usual bathing hour, and from five to six in the morning. It is now the latter period, and, as we write, stragglers are taking their early promenade with a manner so sullen that it seems to bid defiance to the brightness of Aurora. Fair girls, whose forms are suffering from perfect inanition of apparel—so lankly hang their morning robes—loiter along. The fashion, at all watering-places, seems to be to make funeral bows before breakfast. The same person who dashes off a Taglioni salute in the evening, now makes you a dejected

obeisance that might become a dervish doing penance. How to account for this singular depression in social intercourse on beginning the day, whether it be out of consideration for the primitive styles of *dishabille*, in which it is usual to appear, remain a mystery which we are no Solomon to solve.

Among the guests we see most of the familiar faces of the "White Sulphur." Timid young girls of the "White" appear here as courteous and beautiful women; we see unerring symptoms, too, of the approach of the *close of the season*. The gentlemen are growing fidgety and restless, incessantly pining after their plantations, and receiving tiresome letters from their overseers. Young gentlemen who have looked forward to the "White Sulphur" to dance themselves into the affections of some rich heiress, sit despondingly in the parlor, or retire to the perusal of their bills in their monotonous lodgings.

An elaborate *fancy ball* comes off on Tuesday night, which, from the extensive preparations, promises to be worth transferring to paper. The complaints of the "fare" at the White Sulphur, so often and so petulantly made, are not heard here. The barbacued chickens, broiled to a marvelous degree of temptation, the excellence of the butter, the cake-like seductiveness of the *corn-bread*, which almost dissolves in the mouth as you look at it; these, and, above all, the purity and cleanliness of the dining-room, table-linen, and table-ware, render such a

complaint impossible. But the established reputation of *the table* of the "Red Sweet" renders an allusion to it almost superfluous.

'LVI.

EDITOR OF THE "RICHMOND SOUTH."

RED SWEET, AUGUST, 1857.

THE day after our arrival at the *Red Sweet* we noticed among the crowd of gentlemen a face which strikingly contrasted with the faces around him. He was a slight figure, with a set of features remarkable for their intellectual cast; a profusion of dark-brown hair, falling back from his brow in long straight masses over the collar of his coat, gave a student-like air to his whole appearance. We mentally set him down as a somebody of personal individuality; certainly a man of whose name we would have expected to hear.

We unconsciously rose to our feet on hearing his name, and found ourselves in the actual presence of the far-famed editor of the *South*, and in such close vicinity, too! Why, our awe increased almost to trepidation; we felt as if locked in a vault full of inflammable gas, likely to explode with the first light introduced into it. Indeed, five minutes wore away in the preliminary explanations before we could be

brought clearly to identify the youthful person before us—who might pass for a student of divinity or a young professor of moral philosophy—with the fiery and impetuous editor of the *Richmond South*, who keeps half the telegraphs in the country at work to waft his dueling challenges to and fro.

Yes, dear reader, this is the Southern editor whom the scribblers at the North set forth in turgid prose as a violent, dangerous individual, and label him *Poison*. He is, we believe, considered one of the ablest political writers in all the South, and his articles were said to be highly influential in the late party controversy. For ourselves, we regard with admiration this gifted young man, for we discern beneath his faults of temperament a gallant heart. We see a magnanimous disdain of everything which wears the faintest semblance of deceit. We admire the boldness with which, on all occasions, he asserts what he deems truth, and combats what he thinks error. We hope to see him outlive his dueling propensities, the only radical flaw in his fine character, which seems now to afford a kind of safety-valve to the wired-down impetuosity of his fiery nature.

The pedestal is established; it remains for him to provide it with a statue. And yet the efforts of nature may be defeated by his own act. Between the metal bubbling in the furnace and the round and polished statue it has been fused to create, the chances of casting intervene.

His young family cannot fail to create an immediate interest in the eyes of the most casual observer. Pictures of the Madonna have not his young wife's rare beauty. She is said to regard the dueling propensity of her husband with the same indulgence she would show if he was stricken with deafness, lameness, or any other physical infirmity. She has taken him for better and for worse, though he may in this one point prove considerably worse than there was any reason to predict, when she appeared in orange-flowers at the altar. And then his beautiful, noble-looking children, they might serve as models for infant Apollos, such as Thorwaldsen or Flaxman might have prayed for!

The man who could, no matter what the provocation, strike down the father of *such* a family, must have a heart of stone.

The visitors were yesterday treated to an intellectual banquet, in the form of a sermon, from a talented young clergyman, (Rev. Mr. Barnwell, of South Carolina.) This sermon must have struck attention, whether viewed as a beautiful piece of composition or as a solemn call to a permanent feeling, that if few can properly express, all share and understand—preparation for eternity. The refinement of Mr. B.'s eloquence, and the classic sublimity of language, could not but impress all with the reality of the great truths he preached concerning life, death, and eternity. At one point he seemed to change his

sermon into prayer, or rather into an appeal to the Invisible, that what he said was true. This young divine was, we should judge from his appearance, scarce out of his studies, and yet he already evinces a power that indicates future eminence in his calling. His discourse was entirely extempore, and some portions of it sublimely eloquent. His manner on commencing the service was strikingly diffident and unpretending. As a reader, he possesses a voice of exquisite modulation and beauty; his rendition of one of the Psalms of David lingers still in our memory.

LVII.

END OF THE SEASON.

RED SWEET, SEPTEMBER, 1857.

A LUXURIANT oak-tree moves broadly over the tranquil landscape before us; gardens teem with fruit and flowers; flocks quietly feed; birds wheel and chirp. We hear children's voices and the low lullaby of happy mothers. The golden corn glistens out of sight, and we catch its rustling whispers of prosperity; the sound of Miss ——'s divine voice—the miraculous nightingale of the Red Sweet—comes wafted from the parlor, while the soft air steals in and envelops everything, so that the trees, and the hills, and the crops, and the sweet feathered-life are

made delicate and beautiful by its pure baptism. On the floor of the gallery without sits a modest-eyed little girl; a doll, night-capped and night-gowned, is in its cradle, she repeating the exquisite verses of "Watts's Evening Hymn" with an air of the most perfect faith in its possession of sentiment and somnambulant faculties.

The end of the season is near. Soon the September wind will moan elegiacally in these grounds over the departed summer; soon the shriveled leaves will be whirled in eddies by fitful autumn gusts. The water-flowers on the margin of the springs will be withering on their seedy stems; the streams will soon be swollen by autumnal rains, and rise threateningly to the summit of the banks. Soon these beautiful grounds will be forgotten as completely as Switzerland, when the glaciers are double-iced; it will soon be as dull here as a rainy hay-time in a pastoral country.

The end of the season is a trying time, and people begin to have long faces at thought of the arithmetical combination impending over them in the financial department. Now comes the process of the pleasant duty of casting one's eyes from the long sinuous curly \$, marshaling the column of the enemy to the awful base—units, tens, etc. Mammals who have a numerous progeny of angels in white blonde to dispose of, grow distracted at the sight. These long, narrow paper-matters are always left until the last

moment, every one seeming to hesitate as they do about pulling the string of a shower-bath.

For ourselves, we pine to return to our "home," for, however magnificent the roof that shelters us, "home" never forfeits its spell upon our hearts. Its most domestic furniture is invested with a species of holiness in our eyes. Its viands have a familiarity of flavor never acquired by the dainties of more splendid fare; its sights, its sounds, its associations, have a stronger hold upon our affections than can belong to any other residence. Like the dove of the deluge, we return wistfully to this ark from the turmoil and strife of the wide ocean of the world, for there our heart is sure of a devotion unsullied by interest. Even in our childish days we recall the joy with which, on our release from the school-room, we were wont to fly to that *home* so dear to us, and to the gentle, fostering love which we never failed to meet there. And, in maturer days, we crept there to pour forth our girlish tribulations, and to meet the cherishing softness of a hand which had a charm never met with elsewhere.

Happy they who are lured *home* by such a mystic fascination!

Some five hundred visitors are said to be still at the White Sulphur. The traveling public may anticipate ample accommodation there next summer. Workmen are already actively employed on the foundation for a monster hotel. Although the pro-

perty has changed hands, the efficient and gentlemanly clerks of last summer are still retained; indeed, we doubt whether the place of Messrs. Fry & Eagle could be satisfactorily filled. Where could the visitors find elsewhere such prompt and courteous attention to their slightest request, such uniform courtesy, such impartiality, and such consideration for the comfort of all?

LVIII.

WASHINGTON EDITORS—MR. GALES.

WASHINGTON, OCTOBER, 1857.

WE have editors in Washington—a score of them, indeed—but some few we have worth talking about—some few who have been talked about—who have been blown upon by “the breath of fame”—some few, in short, who deserve a historian. Now, do not think you see them, dear reader, and place before your mind’s eye Fanny Fern’s description of New York editors, with “dispositions as sour as vinegar,” whom she considers it her bounden duty to demolish.

Not a bit of it! Oh no! You do *not* see *our* editors.

For ourselves, we confess to an admiration of these much-abused exponents of popular opinion.

Any one would suppose, by the unswerving justice and perfection attached by many to the idea of an editor, that they believed the leading journals of the day to be conducted by archangels, instead of men liable to the same prejudices and errors with themselves.

In our city, at the corner of Seventh and D streets, is a building not very noticeable but for the extent of ground it covers and its ancient and dingy aspect. This structure can be said to represent no order of architecture; indeed, architectural elegance seems not to have been thought of when it was designed; display is everywhere scrupulously eschewed.

On entering the door you find yourself in a low-browed, smoke-stained room, with discolored desks and counters. All the appendages seem old-fashioned, even to the aged clerk, who receives you with a politeness, alas! old-fashioned too. If you come on business with the principal, you will find yourself ascending a narrow and rather gloomy flight of stairs. Having accomplished the ascent to the first landing, you arrive at a door which you are told is the entrance to the editor's room. Before a table, covered with papers, pamphlets, and manuscripts, sits a venerable-looking man with a pencil in his left hand (his right hand has been paralysed for some time) as if deliberating a *leader*, of which but a single line is written. No one can glance at that face and not at once perceive it to be that of a remarkable man.

It is a face more noticeable for character than beauty.

With the name of this gentleman (Joseph Gales) the idea of the *National Intelligencer* is inseparably connected. For a long series of years he has been its conductor; and, though backed by a host of varied talent, he may truly be called its life and soul, breathing his spirit as a refining and uniting principle over that able journal. His editorials are considered close in argument, finished in execution, pure in style, and as refined in thinking as they are exquisite in diction. As specimens of pure and perfect English they might stand as models. He opposes with his pen, quietly but unresistingly, every measure which might lead to a disruption of the Union. In the defeats of the party, of which his journal is the acknowledged exponent, he never admits himself discouraged, depressed, or dismayed, but from every fall seems to rise, like Antæus, with renewed vigor.

Such is a hasty sketch of the venerable chief editor of the chief organ of the Old Line Whig party. Whether we view him as the acute critic, as the fervid politician, as the high-minded and generous man, we have before us one of the ablest men of the day. The journal of which he is the acknowledged head wields a powerful and elevating influence throughout the entire country.

And yet, reader, he has still higher honor in the

hearts of all the people about him. The poor and unfortunate are peculiarly his friends. He arrives in Seventh Street, from his residence in the country, in the same cozy, close carriage which has made its journey thither daily for the last thirty years, so punctual to its hour that, were its driver and occupant wanting, the horse would doubtless convey the vehicle in safety, and stop, from the force of habit, at the precise hour, before the low-roofed building. As he passes from his carriage to the office, the passing beggar for once ceases to be vociferous, so certain is he of receiving a spontaneous gratuity from him. Within he is quite likely to be met by the appeal of a widow with one of those large families of orphans, who feels certain of assistance from *him*. For, it is well known in our city, dear reader, that this venerable man is troubled with a melancholy cavity in his brain, where acquisitiveness *is not!*

Narrow-hearted and parsimonious people shake their heads ominously, and say, that to see a man wasting his means on everybody in this way is enough to make the very stones cry out, "Doing such useless things and so much for other people—he ought to remember the 'rainy day!'" They forget that it is recorded of many great men that they were equally non-retentive of money. Schiller, when he had nothing else to give away, gave the clothing from his back, and Goldsmith the blankets from his bed.

A high intellect is a gift from God; a generous heart is his dwelling-place. Over whom do God's angels hover? Do they linger about the downy couches of those who have won their way to wealth through tears and cares and struggles; or, do they bend over the pillow of those who wipe away the tears, console the cares, and solace the sufferings of the destitute? Let those answer who have been rocked to rest by the memory of a deed of mercy.

Such weaknesses are the drapery in which we enfold our *model men*.

LIX.

UNION OFFICE—MR. HARRIS.

WASHINGTON, OCTOBER, 1857.

WE promised in our last to say something more about editors, didn't we?

"What is an editor?" we are asked.

We have all our vague notions of what editors are; and although called upon at a minute's notice to become analytic and descriptive, and to make others comprehend our idea of an editor, we think we can do it.

They are men who spend their lives sitting in critical judgment upon dynasties, and presidents, and cabinets. Nothing approaches more nearly Oriental autocracy than the *we* of a popular editor.

Rusty-coated literati incline their heads reverentially to them; incipient Byrons lay at their feet offerings of papyrus; tickets of free admission to Thalberg and Grisi lie dusty and uncared for upon their table; for them invitations to pleasant pantomimes, panoramas, and public shows; and no end to presents of venison, fruit, and coral necklaces to the olive-branches.

But there are some few penalties for these flattering distinctions. They are compelled to read wiry lyrics, which the author modestly hints he should be glad to see inserted in the journal of which the hapless reader is the hierophant. People not only bring the obituary of their sisters, but likewise of their sister's baby, to have printed. On the whole, they bear these penalties meekly; but sometimes they are compelled to have betrophied in warlike attitude, as one of the appendages of their sanctum, a pair of Colt's revolvers, the vicissitudes of their avocation often bringing them into collision with fiery spirits.

We think no profession contains a larger amount of talent, of refined taste, than the editorial.

In a somewhat retired street in Washington, not famous for length or breadth, nor for the splendid edifices it exhibits, nor for any scenes or events it has witnessed, may be seen an imposing and stately brick edifice, which has arisen like magic in our midst,—the recently-erected *Union Building*. The “Cabinet Councils” of the Executive mansion are

distributed in this building, and laid by the press before a hundred thousand eyes.

In company with some friends, we made, a few days since, a tour of this establishment. On the first floor is the financial and publishing department, with separate rooms for folding, enveloping, mailing, etc. On this floor is the press-room, with its steam-engine, and its furnaces, and its presses.

On the second floor is the compositors'-room, with paper and type of every description; and on the fourth floor are fourteen presses, used by lithographers for government work. These rooms are to be warmed in winter by heated air, conveyed in leaden tubes from the furnaces of the press. This official organ of the distinguished occupant of the "White House" gives employment to three clerks, four packers, and thirteen compositors, besides the editors, and a numberless and nameless army of *attachés* and *employés* too numerous to be specified. The editorial department is upon the second floor.

As we passed we threw a glance within the open door of this "Blue Chamber," scarcely less awe-struck than if we were peeping into a royal closet. Before a table—on which were a pile of uncut duodecimos, corpses for literary dissection—sat a gentleman, not very young, one whom our ladies call "a handsome man." Beneath the table and under his feet nothing was to be seen but newspapers. Before him and behind him and all around him nothing but

papers. From different parts of the country, from every State as well abroad as at home, might be seen files of every leading paper, affording an invaluable treasury of reference.

But not to hold you by the button too peremptorily, dear public, on the threshold of this inner-tabernacle of the official temple, let us present to you its gentlemanly occupant, Col. C., (we dare not give more than his initials,) one of the editors of the *Union*, a forlorn, single man, who, for some reason or other, (ah! there is a whetstone for woman's curiosity,) still retains the solitary dignity of the bachelor state; yes, dear reader, our hand trembles as we relate the shocking fact: year in and year out he has breathed his proportion of air, and filled his proportion of space, until he has reached life's meridian height, and traveled the distance of a year or two on the downward slope, and "no change has yet come o'er the spirit of his dream." Our loveliest belles smile upon him from beneath their most becoming bonnets—smiles which he receives with an impassible dignity of reserve such as would make the fortune of a diplomat.

A word in your ear! We learn from a fair friend at our elbow that the ice is thawing; our *bachelor editor* actually smiles in return to the ladies; takes no *extra* pains to avoid meeting them on the street, and has even ventured on the *bold stroke* of joining them occasionally. In consideration of these re-

lenting symptoms our belles have determined —
ahem!

Mr. Harris, principal editor and proprietor of the *Union*, presents to our eye a fine specimen of a “Virginia gentleman.”

LX.

SOUTH CAROLINA EDITORS—MR. RHETT—EDITOR OF THE NEWS—
YORKVILLE ENQUIRER.

WASHINGTON, OCTOBER, 1857.

WE have been requested to give a “Sketch” of what our imagination suggested of the editorial fraternity of South Carolina, not one of whom we have ever seen, and we felt, therefore, fully qualified to comply with our friends’ urgent request. Besides, what delicate compliments we could pay to each under cover of them *all*! Think of it, dear reader, the whole South Carolina editorial fraternity, all of their helpless selves placed upon paper! Why, we almost fancy we see a simultaneous tossing of editorial heads and a careless shuffling of feet, as much as to say, *Who cares?*

We first got our scrap-book, with its red morocco doors, and compared the choice notices and poetical compliments to our pen emanating from this chivalric State, and, as we read, we grew more senti-

mental, more gracefully insinuating—in short, more decidedly in the vein to bait the hook dropped through those editors' ears into their hearts. We commenced determinedly and perseveringly to give the preliminary flourish. Of course they are all handsome—that is certain. We know they are standing on the very tip-toe of expectation to hear the many good things which must follow *such* a commencement.

The senior editor of the *Charleston Mercury* we decide to be a noble-browed father of a family possessing high intellectual endowments, and *Mercurial* only on the subject of *State Rights*, with which he is as closely amalgamated as a Smyrna fig to its fellow fig in its drum. This gentleman's fidelity to the principles of the school he represents (known as the *Barnwell Rhett School*, and of which his journal is the acknowledged organ,) renders him peculiarly obnoxious to Northern politicians, who seem to have set him up as a target for their shafts. There is an Arabian proverb, that people only throw stones at trees laden with fruit!

And the editor of the *Charleston News*, brother of the noble *Southern Matron* of the *Mount Vernon Association*; he who wrote that poetical description of a *Storm at Sea*, which dear darling Mr. Gales copied into the *Intelligencer*, and which we thought showed the exquisite texture of the writer's cultivated mind! He *must* have a high-bred air denoting his Carolina origin.

And the poet-editor of the *Yorkville Enquirer*—another peep in the crimson-bound scrap-book; his compliments are so poetical he must be a poet—we decide in our own mind that he must have such a white-browed, classic profile as never was seen, except in the Vatican, chipped and chiseled in ancient marble, and whom we imagine nestled in a cottage snuggled close in the bosom of some green slope, with a lovely woodland fairy, and who might claim the flowers as sisters for his companion.

We feel sure that he must be the star of some select circle, and when fame condescends now and then to waft to Washington the name of some *rising young Carolinian*, we involuntarily ask if he is not the editor of the *Yorkville Enquirer*.

And the accomplished editor of the *Spartansburg Express*, who penned that handsome notice of the *Mercury's* lady correspondent. Our imagination, striding off in seven-league boots, decide that he *must* be a stately six-footer, with a voice like the whisper of the south wind dallying with silver-lined blades of grass.

And now, gentlemen, we beg, if these imaginative *pictures* are not correct, we beg and entreat that you will not dispel this delightful romance of our life. If you are *not* handsome and *not* poetical-looking, let us at least be in blissful ignorance of the fact. Do not crush our treasured romance at one blow, unless you wish us to leave a tear at the end of this sketch.

LXI.

THE CAPITOL AND ITS ROTUNDA.

WASHINGTON, OCTOBER, 1857.

ONE of the most attractive objects to strangers visiting Washington, is that building so familiar to all residents—the Capitol. With a view to accommodate the representatives of our rapidly growing country, this structure is stretching its cords and enlarging its boundaries, till the original edifice looks merely like the seed from which the rest has sprung. Whatever judgment may be passed upon the architectural varieties of this building, its general effect is certainly grand and imposing. Much knowledge, much research, and much good taste are manifested in every part of the work. It would be no easy task to describe all the ins and outs, all the goings up and comings down, of this capacious edifice; but there is not a single object in or about it which is not looked upon with pleasure and interest.

There is hardly any spot within this huge fabric more suggestive than the Rotunda, a vast entrance-hall, whose sweeping walls are almost lined with paintings which float before the eye, group after group, in all their grandeur. Each picture excites associations; for every painting and every face is connected with some event in the early history of

our country, all relating in some way or other to our struggles for independence.

The Rotunda is generally peopled with strangers, though in all human probability not one out of a hundred of the visitors have any taste for art, or feel sufficient interest to enable them to examine the explanatory card appended to each frame. There is, however, no lack of gazers, such as they are; and before these paintings, any fine day, may be seen toilets which would grace Broadway in its season of glory. Belles in very small bonnets, under the convoy of fashionable cavaliers, stop confidently before these works of art, pitching their remarks and criticisms in that distressing key which Shakspeare certainly did not refer to when he commends the gentleness of woman's voice.

"Wier's Embarkation of the Pilgrims" is the most important, and considered, by those who are competent judges, the finest in this collection. At first view it is a striking work, and bears study as a composition. This picture is very popular, because it appeals to the feeling so quickly aroused in every American heart—a high and heroic determination to defend the holy cause of right! We stand before it with reverence, for it summons from the dusty dead the shades of those glorious patriarchs who bore with them to our country that love of freedom and hatred of oppression which were the germs of the liberty we now enjoy.

In the centre kneels the grand feature of the picture, the pastor of the embarking Pilgrims, with uplifted hands, in the act of invoking God's blessing; his spiritual countenance expressing solemnity of thought, and a determination to do all that God's inspiration commands. The sombre face of Miles Standish, with his deep eyes and knitted brow, seems to menace revolutions yet to be.

But while in these personages of the group are depicted stern purpose and daring, the women are trembling with emotion. An aged matron, with head slightly bent, clasps caressingly a helpless invalid boy, whose pallid face and earnest eyes are cast far away heavenward. Another female figure, her face turned from us, seems weighed down with emotion.

At the extreme right of the painting the surpassingly lovely face of Rose Standish, with its look of devotion, is visible. One hand rests confidently on the shoulder of her kneeling husband. What a world of exquisite emotion is expressed in that lovely face! What celestial refinement of affection! Sweet spirit! so sanctified in our thoughts, that we scarcely dare to consider thee too deeply. As we gaze, we recall all thy meek endurance on the barren shores of Plymouth, the gradual wasting of the frail texture of thy young life. The sterile soil of New England holds thy sacred dust; but what could compensate, to him who kneels beside thee, for thy loss? In the

after-turbulence of his unsettled life, was he not soothed, elevated, and cheered by an ethereal visitant from the heavens, who looked with a seraph's smile through the prison-bars of his iron life, pointing to serener skies, opening to him fair glimpses of the beautiful beyond?

This picture may well stand as an excellent specimen of the class to which it belongs; and it is, though mute, an eloquent missionary. Situated as it is in the very heart of stirring and busy life, amid the fret and fever of political speculation, the careworn statesmen, passing and repassing those voiceless faces, may behold the secret of that success which attended the efforts of our forefathers—*simple reliance on God!*

The headlong leader of a partisan warfare may glance upward at these mute figures, as he hurries to the arena of debate, and there learn a manifesto of principles which may serve as a banner around which the divided sections of his party may rally for conquest.

The Rotunda collection contains other paintings of much merit that appeal to our taste and love for the beautiful, but none that touch us in a similar manner with the one we have just been describing. We might talk of the loveliness of "Pocahontas," painted by Chapman; of the beauty which hangs around Vanderlyn's "Landing of Columbus," as he plants his standard on the new-found soil with a so-

lemnity of manner, a devout and humble worship of all that is around him.

The "Discovery of the Mississippi," by Powel, a Western artist, is another picture in this collection. When we first looked at it, we confess we did not like it. The striking and eye-startling effect it produced seemed to us far from artistic, in the highest degree theatrical, and exaggerated. But we come again to it, and again, repeating to ourselves the time it was intended to represent. It grows upon one, for, as we look at the picture, we can almost hear the loud shouts and huzzas of the exulting Spaniards. No language could tell as well the delight and joy of De Soto and his band on discovering the long-sought-for stream.

The lamented Greenough's noble group is a work by a true artist, an expression of true artistic inspiration. The perfect moulding of the limbs, the exquisite proportion and harmony of all the parts, the surpassingly lovely face of the mother, render it more like a group assuming the aspect of marble, than solid forms hewn out of a rock. The countenance of the mother indicates the great yet silent feeling within. Her child is clasped, her lips apart, her head slightly turned aside, her breath suspended, in a listening attitude, as if she expected every moment to hear again the stealthy tread of the savage, which her ear had caught a moment before.

There is something more than the *form* of loveli-

ness in that face. It is an expression of deathless affection, the most holy feeling in nature, a mother's love, given to the stone.

The face of the hunter expresses the high purpose of calm thought and conscious superiority over his wily adversary.

The Indian, also, is a noble figure, of magnificent proportions and wonderful muscular power. His face is working with rage and despair, and his powerful frame wrought into intense action by the terrible energy within.

Great perfection in anatomy and execution is exhibited in all the details of this work, and the entire group is a noble monument of modern genius.



LXII.

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR—SECRETARY THOMPSON.

WASHINGTON, OCTOBER, 1857.

HAVING occasion a few days since to call with a friend at the *Department of the Interior*, we propose giving our distant readers a peep within this government pile—a building which forms a memento of the architecture in vogue during the days of the Hanoverian succession.

We found standing before the marble portico of this stately structure a sombre equipage, which, al-

though ungraced by a single emblazonment bespeaking the position of its owner, was marked, by the beauty of its grays and the neatness of its appointments, as belonging to some person of consideration, to say nothing of the impudence of the portly coachman, whose left limb was dangling over the corner of the dark-green hammercloth with an air of defiance that plainly bespoke them to be appurtenances to an establishment of some six thousand a year. Stationed near this was a ponderous hack; its broad-backed horses dozed over by a clumsy driver, toward whom glances were ever and anon directed from the liveried groom, conveying a strong impression of disgust.

A mysterious-looking middle-aged man, with speckled hose, who might have been taken for a messenger or a butler, answered the bell, turning the door upon its voiceless hinges, and circumspectly bidding us follow him, marched us forward with the stern perpendicularity of a policeman escorting a delinquent. As we made our way along the vestibules, whose heavy, double-plyed matting served to muffle all sound, we glanced in at an open door, where a gentleman sat upon a mahogany stool filing off strips of paper on iron skewers.

On we went, on and on, with tall wooden presses on either side extending from floor to ceiling, and filled with ponderous buff-leather quartos, (*Land Records* from vol. i. to vol. ccxxviii.) No thin, delicate, and

perfumed duodecimos were there, with costly engravings on steel, and letter-press in gilt. No, the huge volumes and the presses which contained them bore the severe air of practical utility. Many of them were fresh from the press, emitting that sickly odor of newly-boarded books and fresh paper, so different from the pungent muskiness of the old bindings in the "Congressional Library."

We were at last ushered into a spacious ante-room, with a whispered assurance that Mr. —— would see us shortly. The only occupants of the room were two gentlemen, one of whom, a middle-aged person, seemed to be a superintendent in his particular department. From the purport of the conversation, we gathered that his gentlemanly and pleasant-looking companion was a new-comer, who had been thrown upon his hands, incompetent to put together the alphabet, or repeat the multiplication table without a blunder. This official was trying to teach his subordinate that business was business; that they knew nothing there of ox-marrow and *eau de Cologne*. In a few moments they withdrew, closing the door as charily after them as if either they or us were laboring under a concussion of the brain.

There exists in the Washington world certain spots endowed with local sanctity of a peculiar kind. In government departments custom has for so many years moderated the movements and lowered the

voices of its employees, that any unusual elevation of tone seems to pass for a crime.

We were now left to amuse ourselves in a room presenting few extraneous attractions; a peep at a modest dwelling opposite, which, though opposite, did not seem entitled to look its aristocratic *vis-à-vis* boldly in the face, but squinted obliquely at it, and the unceasing tingle of a bell, formed the sole enlivenment of our retreat. We examined the dark mahogany writing-table, spotted with much ink and indented with severe penmanship; a scattered regiment of loose and unconnected pamphlets collected under paper weights of the choicest bronze, and printed envelopes, addressed by divers clerky hands to the "Honorable Secretary." There were also what seemed to be dispatches from the "Executive mansion," marked "private and confidential."

After the solitude of half an hour, our friend became quite fractious, and finally rushed to the bell-rope and rang. Now there are few better criterions of the state of a person's temper than their mode of ringing a bell, particularly in a public department, where they are generally hung on scientific principles. The vehement pull brought our friend, the "door opener," who, on his panting arrival, seemed to congratulate himself that the room was not on fire or the lady in a fainting fit.

After a little straightforward chat, we discovered that he possessed considerable shrewdness. In poli-

tics he was a decided Democrat, had a great respect for the *Old Line Whigs*, and a perfect horror of the *Black Republicans*, whose leaders he pronounced men whose minds were in so advanced a state of decomposition that no sanatory commission would undertake to purify the atmosphere corrupted by their presence.

While our friend, who had niched herself into an arm-chair, was perusing an old letter, which proved more amusing than our yea-nay conversation, a hurried rap announced that our reception was expected, and in another moment we were in the presence of Secretary Thompson, a mild, pleasing-looking man of some forty years, who made a polite and satisfactory apology touching the length of time we had been kept waiting.

It is to be hoped that our courteous readers have formed no expectation of hearing the purport of our interview. The mysteries of Iris are not more rigidly sacred in our sight, and if it should ever chance to be betrayed to posterity, so indiscreet a revelation shall never be traced to our pages.

We hear it repeatedly asserted that the most authentic types of human depravity and heartlessness are found in political life, among our public men. There are many who seriously believe that all the finer and better qualities of the heart become perverted and destroyed in the corrupting influence of public life. For ourselves, we left this government

pile convinced of the error of such an opinion, with a fuller conviction than ever that we have men here —*politicians*—who make politics identical with lofty duties and great principles; who sympathize with humanity wherever it struggles, and oppose whatever crushes the rights of their fellow-creatures. Without such men the nation has no greatness, for its significance and its power are in the moral worth of its public men.

LXIII.

CONGRESSIONAL LIBRARY.

WASHINGTON, OCTOBER, 1857.

THERE is hardly any object in our city more suggestive, or more frequented, than the magnificent reading-room of the "Library of Congress," designed by the eminent architect, Mr. Walter. After ascending a wearisome flight of stone stairs leading to the Rotunda, a sliding door at the extreme end of a small gallery wheels noiselessly back, disclosing a softly carpeted room—grand, long and high—whose glass ceiling, veined by cornicing, fluting, and garlands, seems bright like burnished gold, mingled in wreaths of gilded leaves and lilies.

When we paid our last visit we found it gayly peopled as usual; couches filled with groups conversing in the customary library undertone—which is a

drowsy murmur. In spite of the early hour, we saw in the various alcoves scores of mute readers, who sometimes lifted up a glance as we passed, and then, like Dante's ghosts, relapsed into their penance.

Our eye fell upon several of the "habitués" of the place, timidly propitiating the attendants with small fragments of whispered conversation, listened to with impartial politeness—again glancing up from their books with visible discomfiture as some gayly dressed belle, in all the grace of fashionable costume, floated up to the same attendant, (who is especially the good genius of female book-worms,) and begged to see some ponderous volume, which she carelessly turned over to the imminent peril of delicate lemon-colored gloves—grievously interrupting our elderly friend, who we have no doubt devoutly wished all female literati, and this one especially, in some distant paradise not particularly specified.

Dear readers be with us for a brief time, in these secluded alcoves, for they seem *very nests* for human thoughts. Stand reverently, for the voices of the dead are all about us. What hundreds of literary laborers have toiled upon the mental furniture of these walls—and many, ah, *how many*, that the world has never rewarded! All the struggles, the sorrows, and the cares which wait on those who work with hand and brain, alas! for bread, unwinds itself

as we gaze on the works of these dead patriarchs of thought.

On one shelf the Memoir of Chatterton meets our eye. We see this wonderful boy; we behold his proud spirit, conscious of great powers, cut off from household ties. We turn to his last works, wrung forth for bread. Then the catastrophe, the poison, the suicide, the manuscript torn by the hands of despair and death, and strewed around the corpse—nothing in literature like that life and that death!

Beside this memoir, whose associations are so tragic, rests Goldsmith's immortal novel. Its tender incidents, its pathos and its comedy, its exquisite fireside pictures of perfect beauty, come back to us to show that patience in suffering, that persevering reliance on the providence of God, that quiet labor and an indulgent forgiveness of the faults and infirmities of others, are the certain means of happiness in this world, and teaching us also that the heroism and self-denial needed for the duties of life are not of the superhuman sort—that they may coexist with many faults.

To Mr. Meehan and his polite assistants, the ladies are indebted for many pleasant hours in this delightful resort.

The announcement of Judge Nicholson's election as United States Senator from Tennessee, has been received here with marked pleasure. The high personal character of this gentleman, had, during a residence of four years in our city, as chief editor

of the *Union*, won the esteem and regard of a wide circle of friends. The social circles of our city have also received a charming addition from the same State, in the family of the Postmaster-General. The interesting daughter of this gentleman was our first love—"New Administration" loves we mean.

LXIV.

OPENING OF THE SESSION—MR. BENTON—THE CENTRAL AMERICA.

WASHINGTON, NOVEMBER, 1857.

THE familiar faces of many of the *old members*—those from the North in fur coats, built as if for an Arctic expedition—are making their appearance on our streets, while the *new member* is not less easily distinguished among the crowd.

It is a remarkable circumstance that the transition from the population to the legislation, from the taxer to the taxee, produce a much greater change in mediocre men than in those whose qualifications are of a nature to attract the attention and admiration of the nation. Clay, Calhoun, or Webster, may have been scarcely conscious of this change in their state, for whether represented or representing, *their* eminence was unquestionable. But the change produced in the tone of an ordinary man by the letters *Hon.* preceding his name is unmistakable. The *new*

member at home and the *new member* at Washington are different men. A month hence it will require personal indorsement to the certificates of newspaper reports to enable his constituents to conceive the colossal proportions of the Representative who left them so mere a pigmy. *Here* he is not compelled to render a daily account to his constituents of the use of his five senses. *Here* he is a *public man!* and everybody is his most obedient servant. If single, brilliant belles, whose near-sightedness had disabled them a year ago to discern an obscure young man, when in moping attendance on some country cousin, are *now* lynx-eyed in their recognition.

Many of these incipient "Hon's." are already concocting their maiden speeches. Reams of rough drafts are passing through the hands of some scribe of all work, who is crossing t's and dotting i's of a speech, which, in the mind's eye of the "Right Hon.," is already beheld in the columns of the *Globe*, and duly dispatched per mail for the edification of his particular district. This "maiden speech" may establish for him a species of reputation. He may be called in New York journals "that rising young member," nay, "that distinguished young member," and become consequently enamored of himself, and will consider it due to his reputation to give political dinners, frequented by certain self-styled great men, who will drink his champagne, and, when his back is turned, laugh at him.

Many of the new members' wives arrive here looking like a last year's number of the *Journal des Modes*, and entertaining an extremely philosophical contempt for the pomps and vanities of Washington life. But they very soon begin to experience an interest in the minutiae of female existence as it passes here. They soon discover that the finery which had worn the newest gloss of novelty at home is obsolete here; that their waist is too short, their dress too long, and their fringed mantillas the Washington chambermaids have thrown away these three months. In short, after a morning's round, they are satisfied that they will disgrace their friends by their appearance, till they have humanized their barbarous home-fashions.

Several days are then spent at the counters of our leading stores; until that is passed, the "new member's" lady is a dead letter—an inadmissible impropriety, who can neither receive nor pay visits. By the time she has purchased a few new dresses at "Perry's," (the obliging clerks saving her the degrading detail of knowing how many yards it requires to make her endurable,) replenished her card-case at Phipp's, and her trimmings and fringes at Mrs. Lowe's flourishing establishment, she finds herself in that elation of spirits which a first week passed in the metropolis is apt to infuse into a person whose head is minus the organ of acquisitiveness and whose pocket is garnished with a well-filled purse.

The Cabinet receptions of the new Administration will commence much earlier than those of their predecessors. The wealth of the present Cabinet, and their elegant style of living, leave our gayety lovers to anticipate these *soirées* with great eagerness. From the preparation of costume, one would suppose they were to equal those gorgeous *fêtes* of Versailles, whose golden waste proved the means of sapping the foundations of the ancient monarchy of France.

Mr. Benton appeared at Church last Sabbath, for the first time since his severe illness. His appearance is saddening, and his evident debility affecting to witness. The country will, we fear, not long have the benefit of his equitable heart and fine intellect. The hand of skill is doing its best to retard the evil, but his country must ere long be deprived of a devoted servant.

The public mind here is no longer agitated with heart-rending accounts of the loss of life on the *Central America*. The interest which hung over that awful desolation—the interest to which so many hearts flowed out with painful sympathy—seems (except in a limited circle) to have passed away.

Ah! gentle, saddened, weary-hearted wives, all widowed in a night! Oh! if we could look into those homes whose blank windows and closed doors wear so sad an aspect! The solemn, weary nights adding the awe of darkness and the solemnity of loneliness to their sorrows, with fearful dreams of a

ship drifting over the ocean, struggling to save themselves ; the roar of the winds and the mountain billows in their ears ! Who may speak the anguish of such dreams ? God alone sees the fullness of their sorrow.

LXV.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTE LECTURES—JOHN B. GOUGH.

WASHINGTON, NOVEMBER, 1857.

THE citizens of Washington have had an intellectual banquet spread for them in the series of lectures recently delivered at the Smithsonian Institution. Those of that great apostle of temperance, Mr. John B. Gough, were a coveted and exquisite portion. Mr. G. is still young, and seems younger even than he is, from his slight, spiritual appearance.

It was a moment that might well have dazzled his senses, when he arose before an immense concourse of the proudest intellects our country can boast—who had assembled at the Institution to welcome him. There was a hush like the silence of the tomb, as the inspiration of his spirit passed over the audience, and each listener suspended his breath lest even that should drown tones so replete with eloquence. We wish we could do justice to his lecture ; but it is past our power. We cannot even render faithfully the effect it produced upon us.

He had not spoken five minutes before all the passions of the assembly were as much under his control as the keys of the instrument are under the hands of the musician. One moment he would look all around him with an air of the most delighted *bon-homme*,—exactly like a witty child who is about to accomplish a piece of successful mischief,—and relate a felicitous anecdote with a humor so caustic and original that the audience were convulsed with laughter. Then suddenly changing his manner, his eye became fixed on the crowd; his tones grew solemn, his color rose, and from laughter he hurried his hearers to the pathos of tears, as with thrilling eloquence he painted the *beginning* and the *results* of intemperance as they darken in the midst of city life. He showed us the Tempter, as he throws out his earliest lures, sitting in the radiant circle of fashion, attended by wit and beauty and social delight. He unclosed the gay apartments where youth takes its first draught. He traced it from its source under glittering chandeliers, laid bare its channel, and let us see to its very depths. We stood upon the very rim of the great whirlpool; we heard the groans that came up from its abyss; its domestic desolation, its reckless sweep over all order and sanctity.

He unroofed the inebriate's dwelling, and burst upon his weeping hearers with the story of its desolation! He showed us homes where misery and wretchedness brood continually—with starvation by

the hearth and death at the door. He told the heroic histories, and unwritten poetry, inscribed on these walls; the unknown greatness, the love strong as death, the sacrifice deep as the grave, the lonely wrestlings with sorrow, to rescue beloved objects. We saw children with the shadow of an experience upon them that had made them preternaturally old. Woman discharging her daily office, keeping her heavenward look, and love presenting its offering.

Yes, dear reader, we saw before us *martyrs*—not *dead*, but *living* martyrs! In dim attics and cellars, ay, in sumptuous dwellings; we saw wives, and mothers, and sisters, exercising a heroism, in the endurance of suffering, that makes dim and pale the trophies that are plucked from fields of war. We heard the cry of pained hearts, we saw the quivering features and the blistering tears of those who yet live and suffer—martyrs without the palm!

With wizard-like eloquence he suddenly unrolled a new firmament all spangled over with orbs of brilliancy and beauty. He pointed to it as the temperance reformation—a remedy that could make safe and strong those recesses out of which issue so much social evil—a remedy that would send the poor inebriate to a renovated home, and cause little rescued children to sing thankful hymns.

Then with the true *power* of genius he apostrophized *water* in all its forms of beauty, drawing a picture delicate as the subtlest dream. How simple

and clear he made this element of temperance, and yet how mighty! At one moment it spoke in whispers of the softest melody, and then awoke the echoes of the world with its Niagara roar. He made it play round the globe in untamed liberty! We saw brooks and rivers go dancing down the mountain, and through the broad plains. Seas and oceans tossed their spray, and rolled their tides in unwearied enjoyment of unrestrained motion. We saw streams totter down the defiles of their lofty home, with many a tumble and dreadful fall, making their way through hoary forests, and through valleys filled with caves and haunted glens. We saw quiet nooks, where they rested in their course, decked with diamonds. We saw their sleeping-places in mines of gold and silver, to which greedy man was not admitted.

He made the progress of this transparent element that of an all-conquering king. The mountains opened, the valleys retired, and the deep-seated forests gave way before it. Everywhere, as it advanced, the shores bent into graceful curves to welcome its approach. Then he made it pour forth such a torrent of music as would make the fingers of *Jael* ache in the despair of imitation. We heard the anthem of the river, and the melody of ten thousand little waterfalls singing as they glide. The billows of the ocean performed their parts in all sorts of time, and yet there was as perfect harmony in its swelling thunder as in the wild frolics of its lesser playmates.

The song of the river, and the lullaby of the waterfall, were in our ears.

With indescribable eloquence, and with a triumphant glee, he poured out this glorious tribute upon the altar of temperance, conveying the strongest impression we ever received of genius rejoicing over its own bright creation. He was not a mere orator; he was a Pygmalion; his Promethean hand had stolen the sacred fire, and he scattered it with a profusion which left a spark on every heart.

An awe came upon us; we seemed to stand face to face with one whose wings were already growing, already stirring with the air that comes to bear them to the unseen world. When he ceased, that vast concourse arose and walked away in subdued silence.

Go on, apostle of temperance! gather thy jewels about thee, as thou art gathering them now, thy setting will be one of unsurpassed glory; and at the last day, wives, and mothers, and sisters, whose loved ones have been redeemed, shall rise up and call thee blessed!



LXVI.

ENTERTAINMENT AT GOV. BROWN'S.

WASHINGTON, JANUARY, 1858.

THE most brilliant and *recherché* entertainment ever given in our city came off last week at

the residence of the Postmaster-General, Hon. A. V. Brown, of Tennessee. When we entered the house, an elegant mansion, formerly occupied by the French Minister, we saw, at a glance, that the company composed the *elite* of Washington. Every person of note in the metropolis seemed to have crowded together to give lustre to this *fête*. The almost regal ball-room, a spacious and lofty apartment to the left of the entrance hall, was lined with superb mirrors, extending from floor to ceiling, and divested of furniture to make room for the dancers, who were moving to the music of a fine band, swelling in those long, delicious chords which impara-dise the moment and make life all poetry. In the drawing-rooms opposite, those who declined dancing might retire, and find cushioned lounges, chairs of any angle of inclination, suggested by the fancy of indolence and ease, and *jardinieres* bright with flowers from the hot-house of the Executive mansion. In the centre of these rooms stand the host, hostess, and daughter, occupying the post of receiving.

Mrs. B., an elegant-looking woman, is dressed in rose-colored brocade, with an exquisite resemblance of lace stamped in white velvet, on either side a "point-lace" cape; a head-dress whose fleecy whiteness rivaled the snow, soft as down, with ornaments few and tastefully arranged, completed her attire.

But it is the lovely girl by her side we wish to draw your attention to, as she receives with engaging sweet-

ness the salutations of her mother's guests. A white tissue embroidered in moss-rose buds of the most elegant description, a circlet of pearls on her hair, and natural flowers on her bosom, present an appropriate and beautiful contrast to her mother's more elaborate and gorgeous toilet.

The charm of Miss S. is her simplicity of character, of all qualifications the most acceptable in the highly artificial society of Washington. A life of peace and happiness is unfolded in the serenity of her placid features. This sweet girl performs on the harp beautifully, with arms white as those Venus might have lifted above the sea-foam, and little pink-tipped fingers, so delicate and taper that one feels it is marvellous how they can pinch the cords so as to produce such full-sounding pleasant notes as they do. Young, lovely, and an heiress. Like Elizabeth of old, whichever way she turns people will assume an attitude of devotion. Her fortune will insure her suitors of various countries; but we have no fear that she will become dizzy from such an exuberance of income.

About twelve o'clock we passed from the drawing-rooms to the ball-room, and, from our post of observation, we propose to point out to our distant friends the various celebrities. Come, then, take a seat in this quiet nook, where the lights fall softly, and you shall have no reason to complain of the dullness of your "cicerone."

Note that massive head resting against the crimson curtain, receiving the light on a spotless white neckcloth. The waves of gray hair show a solid mass of intellectual organs which express energy, decision, and will. As we contemplate this majestic figure, towering above the surrounding crowd, we feel persuaded some still more auspicious destiny is in store for this gentleman, Sir Gore Ouseley. As we look at him, the "all hail! Macbeth, that shall be king hereafter," of the weird women of Fores, comes to our lips.

Look again! Note that figure in white, with head-dress of scarlet honeysuckle; she seems quite at home amid all this gayety, and yet not like one whose heart is in it very deeply. The sweet cordiality of her manners is balanced by a certain native dignity that seems to infuse into everything about her something superior, something pure, serene, and refining. England has reason to be proud of this her fair representative, Lady Napier, who, in a distant land, is winning all hearts by the sweet, womanly attributes of her character, lending a grace to her high position by never seeming to lose sight of her happy fireside and domestic pursuits.

Standing near Lady N., you may see Lady Ouseley, in one of Madame Ferrere's exquisite head-dresses, surmounted by two superb diamonds.

Mark the gentleman of slight figure, who seems

to avoid observation. To him is given the talisman to unlock the portals of nature and read truths in the flowers, unseen by common eyes. An angel within bathes him, at times, with inspiration, and when he feels the enfolding clasp of these invisible beings, wings glance, waters sparkle, stars smile, and leaves rustle. The green earth, with its jewel-work of flowers and rosy clouds, all bow to him; the sun, and the moon, and the silvery twilight, and the waters, and the breezes, and the silent dews,—everything on earth brightens at his touch. This gentleman is the English poet, Dr. Charles Mackay, of London. If the reader run away with the idea that he is an imposing man, he will be curiously misled. It is the fault of language that it cannot convey manner, so that the term “imposing,” applied to one so unpretending and so unassuming, would be ill applied. To those whose tastes have been kept pure, who can distinguish truth, there is an indefinable charm in the quiet simplicity of his direct and truthful bearing.

The fine-looking man, whose person glitters with foreign orders, is Comte de Sartiges, a matchless diplomat, who is said to coquette with our negotiations as Mr. Crampton did with Secretary Marcy. Madame S. is dressed in white-embroidered crape, with flowers of light-green spray.

A little farther on we see the financial world represented in the person of Mr. Baring, the great

London banker, whose appearance on “'change,” like Rothschild’s, produces a rise in stocks.

Miss —, of Mississippi, niece of the Secretary of the Interior, is here, with her spiritual face. There is no brilliancy, no contrast; classical, colorless. The pale-red of the small mouth; the liquid hazel of the passionate eyes; the soft brown of her hair, all melting into one harmony of tint, like a fair Italian picture.

And we see, also, Miss —, daughter of the Attorney-General. Happy face! a sweet girl who would make the sunshine of a poet’s home, the ideal of an artist’s dream.

Like the spectre in the “*Walpurgis Nacht*,” this brilliant scene seemed to exhibit to every one the ideal of **his** love. A member of the Russian legation assured us that he fancied himself at St. Petersburg. The lady of Senator Slidell, in a Russian court-dress, certainly supported the illusion. Another, who had passed a year in Paris, declared that the whole thing reminded him of the Tuileries.

The attire of Mrs. S. consisted of a coquettish crimson velvet cap, trimmed with rich lace and ostrich feathers, and black velvet dress, the little jacket of which was trimmed with gray fur of the most light and aerial description.

At about nine o’clock the guests passed from the heated ball-room into the cool interior of the supper-room. We might speak of the elegance and magni-

ficence displayed in the arrangements, and the more than epicurean daintiness of the delicacies successively placed before them. In the centre of the table stood a monster "bouquet," composed entirely of japonicas and the rarest hot-house flowers, and reaching half way to the ceiling. Among the ornaments of the table was one which elicited general admiration. It was the exact imitation of a mammoth "nest," containing two harnessed swans, driven by a man. This exquisitely poetical ornament, composed of the finest sugar, and spotlessly white, was from "Gautier's" establishment. All our citizens unite in pronouncing this elegant entertainment as surpassing, in richness and elegance of dress, in the distinction of its guests from all nations, and in the sumptuous repast, any that has been ever previously given in Washington, if not in this country.

LXVII.

CHILD'S FANCY PARTY.

WASHINGTON, JANUARY, 1858.

"COME early, only a child's party!" our friend responded, at parting; and we finished preparations, and reached the house by eight o'clock. We found the dressing-room in a hum and bustle of excitement. Children of all sizes,—from the little aproned

chap, hardly yet from the nursery, up to the merry girl of fourteen,—were twisting their curls, adjusting their braids, and shaking out tiny embroidered handkerchiefs, from which delicate perfumes were wafted. In the drawing-room we found a number of papas and mammas who formed a distinct circle by themselves,—the gentlemen discoursing of the lately-formed committees, the latter of Madame Delarue's last opening.

With a burst of sound that made us start, a band, stationed in an ante-room, commenced a most bewitching measure, which acted like magic on the swarming little crowd above stairs. Groups came pouring in, hurrying hither and thither, finding partners, finding places, with all the stir and consequence of older people. Each child appeared in fancy costume, many having correct conceptions of the characters they represented, depicting them with much truth and humor.

A graceful girl of twelve, with brown hair and bright eyes, was enveloped in the velvet coif and pearly carcanet of the beautiful Mary of Scotland; while darling little Blanche —— was elevated, by the most sublime cork-heels that “Mieman” could manufacture, into the semblance of a pigmy “Cleopatra.”

Harry ——, a school rowdy of the first water, who puts a broken chair in the place of a whole one for the benefit of his teacher, was periwigged and

grand cordon-ed into a courtier of the time of Louis XIV. To see the air of consequence with which he passed through a whole troop of "babies," as he contemptuously denominated a respectable class of little people, who waged on him an uncompromising war! Sometimes they managed to pin scraps of paper to his satin-slashed coat; it was beautiful to see the *courtly* air with which these were removed, without the slightest abatement of dignity, as though he disclaimed all association below the level of a palace.

Reader, we shall hear something of this lad one of these days. He may grow up to write a *Pendennis*, or become Judge Advocate.

There was a miracle of a little teacher—a mimic schoolmistress, with a vein of sober wisdom such as might have become Mrs. Elizabeth Carter—who seemed fully competent to take charge of her half dozen A B C-darians. She tried to look demure; but beautiful were the dimples that *would* trip across her face in spite of its assumed soberness. As well might you look for dignity in a humming-bird or a fawn, as in bewitching, roguish Ida—the darling! Ah, Ida is a sad romp! It is a hard thing to say of her, but her mamma says it, and shakes her head the while, and her brother says it, and spreads open his arms for his pet to spring into; and all her little friends say it, and declare, with softened faces and

gentle voices, that she is good for nothing but—to love.

There was one little fellow in a tartan jacket and trowsers and a Highland cap, the incongruities of which would have made Glasgow hide its head under its plaidie. Poor child! he was evidently not at home in the character, for he twisted himself into as many shapes as a cloud-wreath in a tempest; thrust his hands in his pockets, then took them out; first smiled, then looked grave; he had, in fact, all the appearance of a painfully shy child. Our little schoolmistress seemed so sorry that the Highlander was not at ease. At one point we saw the bright little creature balance herself on her toes; her chubby arms stole softly around his waist, and, bending her neck, she put up a pair of fresh red lips, with the daintiness of a bird, and (would you believe it?) actually kissed the little fellow to reassure him. A few moments after she was patiently going through the A B C-dom of the baby-frock gentry, kissing one, patting another, coaxing a third, and then, with what a matronly air she bade the tiny loiterers go directly home!

A bright boy of ten appeared as a miniature edition of a Broadway dandy; the spotless pantaloons, the white vest, with a chain and heavy bunch of charms spread over it, the faultless neck-tie and tiny gold studs, and a pair of "Bajou's" gloves of the faintest primrose-hue. He appeared to have, every now and

then, a spasm of exulting surprise as the idea occurred to him of his present position. He bit his pink lips; stamped his patent-leathers; ran his hand distractedly through his hair, fresh from "Gibb's" curling-irons, and benignly waved his Honiton-edged handkerchief on the tips of his exquisitely gloved fingers. And the easy assurance, the elegant *nonchalance*, the "die-away-air," which is the distinguishing mark of an eighteenth-century dandy, he depicted to the life.

"Six bunches for a fip! six for a fip! flowers! flowers!" How deliciously sweet was that voice! Fathers paused from their worldly discussion of the profoundly-interesting Kansas embroglio, as those clear, touching tones fell on their ears. A little barefooted girl, with a patched calico frock, tripped along, holding up her flowers with a winning, pleading, heavenly smile. In spite of her coarse and homely clothing and lowly occupation, her manner, her step, her expression, the very tones of her voice unconsciously betrayed our little orphan pet, of whom, dear reader, we have made mention before. There is a kind of halo around this child which we could recognize anywhere.

This joyous troop of juveniles, before eleven o'clock arrived, were resigned into the hands of servants in waiting, and in a little while were, we have no doubt, soundly sleeping.

Pity that we cannot always be children!

LXVIII.

ENTERTAINMENT AT GOVERNOR FLOYD'S.

WASHINGTON, JANUARY, 1858.

DEAR, distant reader, we are now seated, pen in hand, before a sheet of foolscap, with the ambitious design of conveying on paper some idea of the *recherché* and brilliant reception which came off a few evenings since at the residence of the Secretary of War, Gov. Floyd.

As we approached the house, an unusual degree of stirring and bustle was perceptible; private equipages and public hacks depositing their inmates, in full array, at the door. Light steps ascended the hall stairs, and there was a tripping through the rooms, and soft cheerful laughs. The dressing-room was in a ferment; waiting-maids darting from one to another with an air of great importance. And such wreathing of arms, and fluttering of muslins, and waving of curls, and flashing of eyes!

A joyous stir was audible when we entered the large and well-proportioned drawing-room; gentlemen's deep tones and ladies' silvery accents blending harmoniously together. In the brilliant throng were officers of the army and navy in full uniform; diplomatic stars of almost every court in Europe; diamonds, as if gathered in masses from the valley of Sinbad.

At the entrance door, Mrs. F. and daughter occupied the post of receiving; the former, a lady in the noon of life, with hair parted smoothly, and brow serene as a summer morning. She seemed misplaced among that sparkling crowd, for this lady is one who presents to our eye a type of the quiet, serene excellence of women; one of that class who hold aching heads, and bathe hot temples, and kiss away pain, and sit and watch while others sleep; one who, when trouble comes, tries to make it light, and helps to find all happy things to weigh against it.

Mrs. Hughes, a young wife, and daughter of the host, in a white embroidered muslin dress, a wreath of laurel-leaves encircling her hair, and a bright smile, giving animation to a fine dark eye and clear brunette complexion. Her little daughter, with a dimpled face and glossy, golden curls, was decidedly the belle of the evening; passing lovingly from knee to knee, questioned by all in succession with a view of eliciting the treasures of a spirit bright as the souls of children ever are. Healy ought to add this child's exquisite head to his collection of sketches.

Dear, distant reader, do you feel a desire to join us in this gay scene? Come, then, sweet friend, whatever name thou bearest, come, take a stand with us here, where a soft perfume of flowers is perceptible, and the light falls softly. In the centre of the room are grouped some four or five gentlemen, engaged in a conversation deeper than the usual

bubble. We recognize the centre figure at once. That stern face and stately form indicates that what he says is law; his very step has a quarter-deck brevity and decision, as if he were forever about to issue a command. This gentleman (Gen. Scott) is in full uniform. The slight figure of the young officer at his side is that of Major Calhoun, son of the great statesman. Not far from the last named, the chandelier throws its cheerful light upon the warm, genial face of Dr. Mackay, the English poet, his countenance suffused with the florid glow of health.

Here, too, is a girlish figure in white, with no ornaments except a pair of exquisite pearl earrings. This is Miss G., a young granddaughter of the late *Father Ritchie*, of this city. But this is only a partial introduction into society, a peeping out rather than a coming out. Her face is illuminated with a smile, such as that ancient and honorable family have rarely displayed among all its generation of dimples. The lady at her side, with traces of much beauty, is the wife of Capt. Goldsborough, of the Navy, and daughter of the distinguished William Wirt.

Here comes a thin, slight figure, the shoulders contracted and drawn in, and the face striking, with sharp angular features. We wonder what specific purpose he (Mr. Seward) has in visiting the camp of the Philistines! An amiable desire, we presume, to thaw the mass of ice that disunites the North and South, which he probably hopes to render a confluent stream.

Near the last gentleman we see a reputed heiress from one of our Northern cities, to whom, it is rumored, Mr. —— (excuse the initials) is to be united shortly. It is a matter of pedigree against pence, pounds against precedence. In our country of shop-keepers a little gold becomes necessary once in a century to assist in emblazoning the escutcheon of decaying families, where there is neither a coal-pit nor a gold-mine on the family estate.

Prominent in the throng we see Lady Gore Ouseley's expressive face and engaging manners, and near by the queenly figure of the wife of the Russian Minister, conversing in French with one of the Legation. Here, too, we see the estimable nephew of the President, (Mr. Buchanan Henry,) who has, according to private report, contributed several fine paintings to the Philadelphia Academy of Fine Arts, and who is said to possess quite enough talent in that line to justify the warm anticipation of his friends that he can become something higher and better than a mere political partisan.

Here, too, we see an eminent lawyer from Kentucky, (Col. Carpenter,) but more recently an active and influential politician from Illinois. Handsome, a ripe scholar who seems to have traveled much, he has already earned for himself the name of *a rising man*, that most auspicious of all names to a political aspirant.

About eleven o'clock we were ushered into the

supper-room by a gentleman of color, a man of dignified deportment and mature years, who had all his life waited upon F. F. V.'s with great credit to himself. He fully sustained his high reputation on this occasion, for seldom have we beheld a more elegantly-prepared table, with pyramids and towers of choicé bon-bons, and huge bouquets of the rarest hot-house flowers, which made the air heavy with fragrance.

Conspicuous among the gentlemen, towering in height far above most of them, was Capt. Meigs, whose name is identified with the Capitol of our country. His superior management and comprehensive mind is rapidly bringing that great work to successful completion. Capt. M.'s manners are quiet and unpretending, and he would be singled out in all society as a highly interesting person.

And now, dear reader, good-night, for the nib of our pen is dull, and our eyes are trying to hide themselves behind pairs of fringes which are nearing each other for an embrace.

LXIX.

SENATE-CHAMBER—MR. DAVIS.

WASHINGTON, JANUARY, 1858.

THE "Leeompton Constitution," with the Message of the President, was sent into both Houses in

the beginning of this week, and since that time wrangling and anarchy have been as much a national pastime as in the days of the Goths and Vandals. The first year of Mr. Buchanan's administration will be inscribed on the page of history in rather dark colors, for the representatives of the Northern sections of this glorious country of God's making and of Christ's civilizing, are unanimous only in sending up as a sacrifice to heaven a dissevered Union. With reckless ambition they are shattering those party organizations which would tend to heal and tranquilize the public mind. They pretend to believe that when the main columns supporting this great Union are forcibly withdrawn, the vast pile may still bear itself aloft. What is it to them that our forefathers have fought, and bled, and died on battle-fields that they might enjoy this freedom—this consciousness of a sacred individuality!

We honestly believe there are men here, who, to accomplish their selfish ends, would, if it were allowed, practice the defiance of every law, human and divine, which, in former times, filled the ice-house of Avignon with dead, and defiled the waves of the Seine with corpses.

On Monday last the House and Senate galleries were thronged to their utmost capacity, the "wordy war" of Friday night having produced intense excitement throughout the city. Mr. ——— addressed

the Senate in a speech of some two hours, in which he did not seem satisfied with driving the South out of Kansas, but banished the whole section out of the Union. This gentleman, though a man of *good* abilities, is far from a phenomenon. He might make a respectable stand on the stump in the West; his speech at a country meeting on the cut-and-dried theme of anti-slavery, might find its way into the County Chronicle. Abuse of the Administration was one of the principal ingredients in his eloquence, and a *joke* on the dissolution of the Union ended his speech.

On closing, a slender figure on the other side of the Chamber arose. During the progress of Mr. ——'s speech a general look of popular restlessness seemed to pervade the dense mass crowding the gallery, but the first sentence of his successor was the signal for profound silence and the fixing of every eye upon the speaker. Since the days of Mr. Clay, we have never heard any one so powerfully rivet the attention of the spectators as this gentleman, (Mr. Jefferson Davis.) It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that his keen eye literally blazed as he poured forth a torrent of withering sarcasm and crushing invective.

This burst of eloquence, this torrent of oratory, sparkling and flashing, did not last more than thirty minutes. For ourselves, during that period, the presence of Mr. Clay seemed to once more fill our eye;

his beautifully modulated voice again sounded in our ears.

We think a cool criticism will place Mr. Davis nearer to Mr. Clay than any speaker in the Senate. He has much of that lamented Senator's purity and flow of style, richness of imagination and graceful elocution.

This gentleman has, by the splendor of his talents, raised himself to an eminence of consideration, not only in the public position he fills, but throughout the entire country.

It is whispered in social circles that the defeat of the Committee of Thirteen on the Kansas bill, which the Administration lost by one vote, is attributable to a lady, daughter of one of our Cabinet Ministers. One of her victims, a prominent but "doubtful member" from the North, who is sighing himself into premature wrinkles and ugliness, conceiving, on the evening before the vote was taken, that Miss —— evinced a preference for a rival member, would have his revenge by voting against the Administration; the result was, the bill was lost. (A word in your ear.) That "member's" fate is sealed, for we saw Miss —— an hour ago, and had she swallowed all the pickles of her father's last State dinner, her feelings could not have been more acidulated against him for his recreancy.

LXX.

ENTERTAINMENT AT SECRETARY THOMPSON'S.

WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY, 1858.

THERE was a brilliant collection of the *élite* at the residence of Secretary Thompson, on last Wednesday evening. The political as well as the fashionable world seemed for a time to have laid aside its scheming, to pay their respects to the charming hostess, who had a smile and a word of graciousness for every new-comer, and a still sweeter glance of intelligence for those endeared to her by the tenderness of private friendship. The piquant animation of her manners has made this lady conspicuous in society from her first appearance.

We passed through a circle of the wives of Senators, diplomats, and ladies of the Cabinet, and found ourselves in an exquisite little ante-room, beautifully fitted up by the elegant taste of Mrs. T. for the recreation of loungers. Some half dozen persons were here gathered into a knot in eager discussion of the costumes of the evening. We took a seat in the only vacant chair which was in courteous vicinity to a lounge where, niched in its corner, sat the Hon. Sec. from —, listening with a plausible degree of edification to the heaviest prose that could well be kneaded together. The distinguished gentleman encountered commonplace with commonplace, an-

swered the most jejune observations by comments equally trite, and calmly descended to the level of his companion's sluggish monotony of mind. All at once the prosy companion's voice fell to a whisper, and by the peculiar manner in which the Hon. Sec. looked about him, as if to ascertain that his overcoat and coachman were in attendance, we judged his companion was *asking a favor*, and from some little experience in deciphering the hieroglyphics of the human countenance, we fancied we could foresee that the courtly smile which the next moment illumined the Hon. Sec.'s face was assumed to convey a negative. The words which fell upon our ear confirmed this idea—"Encumbered as we are at the present moment by applicants." We did not wait to hear more, aware that a *tête-à-tête* in which one of the *têtes* is an office-seeker, should be as sacred in its privacy as the *tête-à-tête* of a pair of engaged lovers. Alas, for the penalties of public life! At this pleasant reunion the distinguished Sec. had sought freedom awhile from State cares. Mistaken hope!

The first person that attracted our attention on entering the crowded dancing apartment was Miss —, with her fresh, pure heart, her simple, earnest sweetness. What rich gifts this fair girl brings to the altar of this Washington world! Fresh, happy young heart, what a pity she should come here where she must barter her warm, ingenious, beautiful faith, her simple trustfulness for the wisdom which makes

the heart barren! She is now intoxicated with joy, for everything is new and gladsome; but soon her spirit will be disenchanted. This scene which looked so green and velvety in the distance, she will, in time, find covered with a coarse, stunted grass, half faded.

Among the gentlemen present is one whose full figure is well worthy the notice of a description. As the light of the chandelier falls upon the face, you see it is as unwrinkled as a boy's; well-cut features, a fine complexion, dark blue eyes, and an expression in which there is not a trace of malignity or wile; such is the exterior of the far-famed Mr. Benjamin Perley Poore, whose conscientious payment of a banner on Mr. Fillmore's election (wheeling a barrel of apples a distance of thirty miles) is familiar to the country. Mr. P., though a young man, has passed several years abroad, and is known here as a ripe scholar as well as a chaste and piquant writer. But this gentleman's delightful temper and spirits seem to us, of his many gifts, the choicest. They render him the charm of our social circles and give a zest to every company he comes into. Not content with being happy himself, he has a trick of making everybody happy that comes near him. We do not know how he contrives it, but such is the effect. The lady of Mr. P. is a daughter of Mr. Dodge, one of our most honored citizens.

Mr. — was there, a gentleman who travels with

lozenges in his valise, and makes it a rule never to sit in wet boots. The beauty of the ladies, the brilliancy of this or that belle, what were such trifles to a man addicted to nervous headaches and engrossed by the daily study of domestic medicine! And yet he is precisely in the same state of health which has kept him in a sort of chicken-broth-convalescence for the last few years.

Mr. —, who has been home making his bow to his constituents, was there in attendance on Miss Lane for a portion of the evening.



LXXI.

PRESIDENT'S LEVEE.

WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY, 1858.

THE last President's "Levee" we attended was a very brilliant one, all stars and diamonds, all plumes and uniforms. We enjoy an attendance at these public receptions; there is a variety of character and manner which is highly interesting, and affords an agreeable contrast to those select and refined assemblies, the guests of which, being educated by exactly the same system, and with exactly the same ideas, think, move, talk, and dress alike. On entering the crowded dressing-room of the Executive mansion on one of these occasions not long since, we found

every head turned the same way ; young ladies looking curious, old ones asking questions, and all smiling and nodding significantly toward a figure which stood before the mirror busily employed in arranging her hair. Her dress was a green satin studded with bouquets of silver tissue, which compelled her to a standing position ; a head-dress which might have served Mrs. Barney Williams in a representation of one of her inimitable Yankee characters ; and a set of Roman mosaics, (portable abridgments of the amphitheatre of Verona,) with a steel-embroidered, orange-colored velvet reticule, emulating the dimensions of a carpet-bag, completed her attire. While surveying with wonder the green and silver rotundity of the lady's person, she suddenly turned from the glass, and we recognized the good-natured face of an old schoolmate who had been some four years before elevated to great affluence, by marriage with a plodding manufacturer in one of our distant cities. Another moment served to convey the following sentences to our paralyzed ears : "La ! my dear —— (we had been so unfortunate as to have been a special favorite, indeed, her partiality for us had amounted to positive insanity,) was ever anything so lucky ? I have been in a peck of trouble ; but thank goodness all's right now. I was to have been presented to Mr. Buchanan by the Senator from our State, but somehow we have missed him in this tremendous crowd." There was an irrepressible titter among the accidental audi-

tors of this ill-timed explanation. "When I spied you out," continued she, unconscious of the consternation she was exciting, "think says I, all will turn out for the best, for you will, I know, take me in."

Alas! she knew of old that we were little addicted to the salutary austerity of saying "no" to any application! In vain we tried to assume a refrigerating distance; she flew off to a minute account of a recent visit to our early home in Delaware, and as she did so touched a chord in our heart that never failed to vibrate. Then came suddenly upon us memories of our school-girl days. We were again in that quiet nut-shell of a school-house, with its inclined-plane roof, overtopping the little cluster of forget-me-nots, at the side of the door, which had been so carefully weeded and watered. Ah! we recalled those days (do we ever expect to be happier?) and remembered all the good turns she had done us. Though possessing little attractions to a refined nature, there had always been a warm-hearted guilelessness about her, and a credulous trust in everybody's purity of intention. We remembered, too, how many a generous school-girl turn, how many a sum she had added up for us in that *hateful* arithmetic; and we determined to brave all and accede to her request. Approaching the waiting escorts without, in another moment we were introduced to her better half—a brown-gaitered, grave-looking individual, whose manner seemed to imply that we need apprehend nothing from him, for, like an immature lemon, he was sour but harmless.

On the first recognition of our school-mate, the female portion of our acquaintance gathered round preparing themselves for the unusual recreation of a scene; but as we took the arm of our new escort, there was a general retreating movement of our fashionable friends from the vicinity. The amazement depicted on their faces, however, was mild, compared with that of our escort, (an aristocratic F. F. V., dating from the field of Crecy,) who examined the person of our companion with an air of as much abhorrence as if it had been steeped in the unctuous cauldron of her husband. He said not a word. The fact that he had escorted a lady who was claimed by *such* people, was enough, and he involuntarily retreated behind the skirts of the most expansive belle of a group near by.

Another moment, and Mr. Buchanan was executing a profound bow to the globose mass of green and silver at our side; the announcing of our own name by the smiling and courteous Marshal, Mr. Hoover, sounded in our ears hollow, almost like the name of the Danish spectre. Imagine us, dear reader, struggling tediously forward to the "East Room," the centre of two figures, one of which looked the image of a colossal cantelope melon. At the door, the crowd was such that our group remained as incapable of locomotion as if inclosed in the Black Hole of Calcutta.

As we glanced around, we met the dignified disdain of the fashionable Mrs. —, and the as-

tonishment of every one within sight. There was a kind of general movement toward our side of the room. All the world seemed to be in quest of somebody, or at least of something. "Members" exchanged looks, and then with a delicacy for which we felt grateful, busied themselves in looking out of the window. Miss —— raised her handkerchief to conceal a smile; the dignified Mrs. —— held her head higher than ever; and her companion cast on us looks of contemptuous curiosity.

At length the weary tour of the rooms ended, and we had scarcely gained the dressing-room before our fashionable friend Mrs. —— approached us to inquire the real nature of the acquaintance between us and that strange-looking woman.

"Where on earth did you pick her up? I should have thought that no humanized individual would undertake the stigma of presenting such looking people; I assure you, my dear Miss ——, you have set the White House in an uproar by your magnanimity. I apprise you, however, that you are universally blamed. The 'noes' have it."

It was not until we reached our own home, and resigned our weary frame to an arm-chair, that we could recall to mind the thousand and one aggravations of the evening. But with this came a feeling of pleasure that we had gratified and won the kind wishes of an early friend, who, with all her apparent simplicity, possessed more real heart than many who ridiculed her.

LXXII.

MISS SAUNDERS'S BALL.

WASHINGTON, FEBRUARY, 1858.

THE 25th of February had been singled out for the last two weeks as one of triumph to our party lovers; for Miss Saunders—daughter of the Postmaster-General—had issued invitations for an elegant ball which it was supposed would close our season of gayety. By seven o'clock, there was a great bustle in the dressing-rooms of our city; a dodging about of lights, a constant tramping of waiting-maids,—wreaths of flowers and bunches of marabouts enough to crush the wearers, had their weight been at all proportioned to their bulk.

A friend had sent us the loan of her maid, an expert *coiffeuse*, to help us out of one difficulty, and this sylph of the toilet executed her task with such dexterity that she left little or no trace of “M. J. W.” behind her. But as the exquisite arrangement of her own hair proved her capacity for the delicate mission she came to execute, the relentless straightening out of our tresses into the “bandeau” style, we were in duty bound to acknowledge by smiles. By nine o'clock, with a warm cloak carefully laid upon our shoulders, we joined a party of friends without; where nothing was heard but the roar of carriages hastening with their flashing lamps, all to-

ward the one goal. In a few moments the blaze of light from the bronze candelabra which grace the steps announced our arrival at our destination. After a fierce contention with a wrangling mob of coachmen and a confused phalanx of carriages, our geographer worked his way to the door; and in a short time we found ourselves in the presence of Miss S., who, in a dress of white silk covered with illusion, the skirts of which were finished with a quilling of the most delicate rose-color, stood with her mother receiving her guests with that winning *naïveté* which gives so great a charm to her manner.

In the reception of their guests we were forcibly struck with the attachment and predilection manifested for their native State. Not a Tennessean, however humble his position here, has been overlooked in this elegant *fête*. Amid the glitter of foreign orders and dazzling array of army uniforms, the humblest *department clerk* from their native State was honored with a greeting and a prominence of attention greater than that accorded to the representative of the proudest "European Court." During the entire evening the fair giver of the entertainment shed life, light, and pleasure. She did not leave it to chance or fate to amuse those whom she had assembled within her home; her invention never flagged, her gayety never ceased; yet both were so natural, that her word and presence seemed

to call forth new sources of joy and delight. All were surprised that they were so agreeable.

Passing over to the ball-room, we found the space in the centre filled with whirling waltzers, who spun round in mazy evolutions. Manœuvring our way through this delirious mass of life, we withdrew into the comparative silence of a corner, where a few lounging chairs were placed. As the merriment of the ball raged around us, we could not but be struck with the brilliancy of the scene. Wherever the eye fell, it rested upon brilliant light and incessant movement.

As the music pants and sighs through the heated air, we will point out to our distant friends a few of the guests.

And first we ask the reader's attention to a very striking face near us. Quiet in manner, a little reserved, he seems neither to court nor shun observation. This gentleman, (Lord Napier,) with his gentle and accomplished wife, has won a place in the regard of our citizens never accorded to his predecessors. The gentleman near the chandelier, with fine expressive face and light mustache, is the Minister from Denmark, Col. Rasloff, who, if he had liked, could have worn foreign orders, but being modest, wore not one. In another direction we see Gen. Harney, who is here, not because he is a general, but because he is a hero. Not far off we see the violet eyes of Miss Lane, and at her side

the "bachelor member" from North Carolina, whose conquering motto is said to be as brief as Cæsar's. Here comes Gen. Ward, "member" from —, who is said to be the victim of a pleasant, comical, harmless, winged boy, called "Cupid;" and not far off we see the Texas Ranger, (Major M'Cullough,) who would be as unmistakably a gentleman in a Ranger's coat and felt cap, as if he was dressed in a coronet and robes. And farther on we see sweet *Juliana May*, who looks as if she must sing with her eyes, they are so large and lustrous. Here comes one of our new Administration belles, Miss W——, of Mississippi, niece of the Secretary of the Interior. This amiable girl greets each passer-by with a bright smile, in which there is not a trace of fatigue. Here is Miss Cass, with her striking intellectual face and rather melancholy eyes; and not far off Mrs. M——, of Columbia, Tennessee, niece of the host, with her beautiful face and oriental eyes. Her dress, a gorgeous "point lace" upon canary-colored satin, is one of the most sumptuous present.

But here comes a lady with a regal look, more remarkable in her than beauty. Rubies would well become her princely port and stately head, crowned with a braid of profuse black hair. This is a daughter of Duff Green, and sister of Mrs. Calhoun. And here, too, is the new member from Charleston, South Carolina; his manners have all that polish and courtly ease which characterize the citizens of that

State. This gentleman is South Carolinian to his finger-tips. In dangerous vicinity we see a soft, shady pair of blue eyes, a sweet smile, and a very pretty mouth, and a glow of pink and a delicately fair skin. This graceful beauty belongs to the daughter of one of our wealthy citizens, Mr. McGuire, who has a fine gallery of paintings and a very large heart. And not far off is Mrs. Crittenden, in a superb blue *moire antique* and point lace trimmings; and by her side, the lady of the Russian Minister, with a soft curve of rich, red lips, and teeth of faultless delicacy and beauty. And last and *least* on our list, dear, darling little Miss Saunders, Junior, who has so much kind consideration for everybody except herself, of whom she never thinks a moment. Of what a woman is not that child the making! A heart sensitively affectionate, and a temper that is sweetness itself. Even here, in worldly Washington, the angel in the bosom sometimes looks out through human eyes, although the earth has sadly changed since the ladder of the old patriarch's dream was let down from heaven!

About twelve o'clock we entered a supper-room, with silver urns bubbling and steaming with *Mocha*, and savoring deliciously of *Smarty's* stewed and fried. The plate, the lights, the variety of dishes substantial and unsubstantial; the piles of fruit, the multiplicity of wines of all colors and vintages; the wonders of confectionery—towers, helmets, castles,

pyramids, pagodas; the perfumes of monster bouquets of the rarest flowers,—were presented to the eye in such profusion and elegance as to be absolutely dazzling. At intervals along the table, were the gentlemen guests, one with a dish of grouse before him, carving with ostentatious dexterity; others taking wine with this person or that person; another making little jocular speeches, suggesting Champagne to one, Hoek to another, or Madeira to a third.

Among the numerous brilliant entertainments of this season, Miss Saunders's ball of the 25th of February, will take its place with the first.

LXXIII.

SENATE-CHAMBER.

WASHINGTON, MARCH, 1858.

THE arm-chair vacated in the Senate by the death of the lamented Butler, is filled by a noble-browed, middle-aged man, who maintains a species of dignity, of all dignities the most imposing—a self-seclusion, wholly distinct from refusals of dinner parties, or the veto of “not at home.” He appears in society whenever there is a positive occasion for his appearance. At political dinners he is, we understand, a courted guest; and those who meet him at such so-

lemnities, rarely fail to mark him as a gentleman of highly cultivated mind and extended intelligence. By the Republican party, however, the new-comer is evidently regarded as a stumbling-block quite as much in their way as his distinguished predecessor, and they seem not a little vexed to find so imposing a successor facing them from the opposition desk, and secretly wish him back in South Carolina.

We enjoyed the privilege of hearing this gentleman's speech on the Kansas question—he made not only a great speech, but a great impression; spoke with the self-possession of an habitual debater, and showed that a worn subject was susceptible of novel treatment and novel interest. A great advantage is bestowed on that constituency which sends to the Senate an eminent man. His distinction ennobles the State he represents, it increases their interests in all that affects the nation.

Not far from Mr. Hammond may be seen a youthful figure, who has been for several years established among the celebrities of the day—written in italics—recognized by the fashionable eye of the Washington public. His costume is arranged with considerable attention to becomingness, and not a single speck mars the glory of his well-varnished boots, the covering for a foot which certainly does no discredit to the good specimen of Hoover's very perfect performance in which it is encased. He seems quite at ease, although it is but eight and thirty days since

he left the House for the Senate-chamber. His voice was overmastered in the former place; but it is pitched to the exact diapason of the Senate, and in his maiden efforts during the last month, he has taken his position in that distinguished body as one of its rising statesmen.

If courted by society as a *bachelor member*, what will he be as a *bachelor Senator*? If so eagerly sought after by the great world there, what will he be *here*? He will be established in the perpetual sunshine of social as well as public distinction. He will become *somebody* who will be of consequence to *everybody*; his fingeraches will create sympathy, and if he chooses to tell ever so long a story, our belles and their mammas will feel obliged to listen to it. The merits he will derive from the change are beyond computation. We cannot suppose that he will grow either taller or handsomer by merely taking a cushioned seat in the upper "House;" and yet the way he will be whispered off into corners, and the enormous increase of his satin-paper correspondence department *might* convince one of less enlightened experience, that he had added a cubit to his stature.

Critics complain of the coldness of this gentleman's manner in speaking, and many regard him as a cold and calculating politician. Long before we had any personal acquaintance with him, we stumbled accidentally upon one or two acts of unostentatious

benevolence, which led us to have a very different estimate from the generally received opinion of his character. The acts to which we refer showed a readiness to assist struggling poverty by substantial acts of kindness, rarely met with. There is so much of the opposite spirit in the political world, so many living only to serve personal ends, and success so often appears to make our public men forgetful of all but themselves, that we think this exception deserving of notice. There are poor young men in our city whose whole future course has been determined by the generous encouragement of Thomas L. Clingman.

The visitor to the Senate cannot but be forcibly struck with the different attributes and manners of the members of that distinguished body. Many of them seemed anchored down in their seats from the beginning to the close of the daily session. But the majority are constantly moving about, passing to and fro like restless ghosts. We note, that Messrs. Seward, Hammond, Clay, Davis, and Iverson scarcely leave their chairs; while Messrs. Bayard, Mason, Toombs, —, Gwin, Clingman, and others, seem to be in perpetual motion. Messrs. Toombs and —, have an eccentric will-o'-the-wispish mode of perambulating, coming composedly round the corner of the Speaker's chair, bringing them in contact with the staid "Sergeant-at-arms," clerks, messengers, and the like, from whose bodies they rebound vio-

lently. We have seen the former appear unexpectedly and swiftly from behind the Speaker's chair, knocking a darling little page almost over, and scattering the contents of the little fellow's arms—letters, papers, etc.—in every direction. These accidents never occur to Messrs. Gwin and Mason, whose style of progression is stately and imposing, as if they had a chamberlain, carrying a crown, marching in procession in front of them.

LXXIV.

ENTERTAINMENT AT SIR WILLIAM GORE OUSELEY'S.

WASHINGTON, MARCH, 1858.

THE unusual and excessive gayeties of the season, the crowded balls and stifling mobs, are giving place to much more delightful and less promiscuous parties. One of the most pleasant of these *reunions* came off at Sir Gore Ouseley's on last Thursday evening.

On arriving at the door we found the house illuminated as if for the reception of *majesty* itself; and yet, no bustle, no crowd, no confusion, no carriages locking wheels, no whipping of poor horses, no shouts of wrangling coachmen. The door was thrown open by a Hungarian footman in silver livery and crimson-topped boots with spurs. The

various arrangements within were all in keeping. Innumerable servants, and four elegant apartments open *en suite*. On entering the reception-room, the names of the entering guests were announneed, in a stentorian voice, by an English butler.

Here we found Sir Gore and Lady Ouseley doing the honors; the former *en grand seigneur*, and yet, free from English reserve and the *hauteur* of English *ton*; the latter with a graecful elegance and self-possession different from that *nonchalance* which is the *métier* of too many of our fashionable hostesses.

Apropos of many of our metropolitan entertainers, who are *trop prôneurs*, teasing with notice, excruciating with attention, disturbing a *tête-à-tête* in order to make up a dance; not one of these was the accomplished giver of this *fête*. If you declined, you were not pressed; if you assented, you were rewarded with a word and smile which made you feel it a compliment.

In the drawing-rooms we met some thirty persons, much less dull than the majority of our dull race, and, in those little tactics that make society unburdensome, perhaps even more accomplished.

One of a cluster of gentlemen rivets interest by a forehead of the most intellectual cast. His voice is one to which Senators listen with reverence,—one which wisdom honors, and philanthropy has cause to bless. All over the country the throbbing of this gentleman's (Mr. Everett) eloquence is felt.

Not far off, Lord Napier is descanting to Mr. Seward upon the beauty of this lady or that, the merits of blue eyes; and in his peroration he sums up all the striking eyes in the room.

Not far off we see the mild face of the widow of Judge Woodbury. Thorwalsden might have taken a model of this lady's countenance for that of the mother of the Maccabees in his celebrated group. Here, too, is her daughter, looking, as usual, the lady—elegantly dressed without pretension, and easy without affectation; and the lady of the Senator from New Jersey, with her large, spiritual, seraphlike eyes.

And Miss Cass, with her pale face and stylish air; and the daughter of the Attorney-General, with the softest eyes that ever shone in a human head; and the handsome nephew of our Delaware Senator, of whose family it is said *Avant eux le deluge*.

And here, too, is the niece of the Secretary of the Interior, in rose-colored crape, an exquisite bouquet of pansies and daisies, and glossy green myrtle, and other sweet flowering things, which nestle in slender green arms. And the Mexican Minister, with his foreign face and the rich glow of a Titian's head; and the daughter of the Secretary of War, so quiet and unpretending; and the wife of the Secretary of the Interior, with a host of friends around her, to each of whom she appears to have something *caustique* or *spirituelle* to say, for every *petit mot* produces a burst of laughter. And a finished gentleman of the Virginia school,

Mr. Harris, senior editor of the *Union*, with something so genial in his countenance, that his first appearance impresses one instantly in his favor.

And here, too, we see the youthful face of the lady of the Postmaster-General, of whom, to have her friendship, is to be worthy, for mere circumstances need never hope to win it; of this lady it is enough to say, that almost all her *friendships* are contracted with those whose condition in life is less prosperous than her own, and every decline of fortune on their part is said to be accompanied by increase of attachment on hers. Tennessee has indeed reason to be proud of this her fair representative.

During the entire evening servants, in rapid succession, passed through the rooms with refreshments in elegant profusion, and, at twelve o'clock, the supper-room was thrown open, and the guests, who were aware of the sudden manner in which the whole affair had arisen, wondered at the magic which had produced a result worthy of a fortnight's preparation. It seemed as if the finest cellars in the country had been ransacked for excellence and variety. There was Hock of a century old, though, for our part, we cannot see, or rather taste, the beauty of this antiquity.

The young daughter of the host, with the *naïveté* of the nursery still clinging to her, was not the least admired among the celebrities of the evening; she carries with her a charm of manner which few American "Misses" of her years possess.

LXXV.

SENATE-CHAMBER.

WASHINGTON, MARCH, 1858.

It is the meridian of Washington gayety, and the festivities of our city are in their brightest bloom. Private parties, receptions, and levees are successively hailed in prospect, and apostrophized as charming on the following day. Every night has its *fête*; and foreign ministers, resident citizens, and wealthy public men, vie with each other in the splendor of their entertainments.

Another feature of "Washington Life" is in full play, and cards of invitation—on whose vast extent Napoleon might almost have picked out the plan of one of his Italian campaigns—are issued for dinners at a fortnight's warning. There is no doubt but some who give these dinners, like the Primrose family after entertaining Squire Thornhill's servants, are forced to pinch it for the next month.

We design at some future day to give our readers a peep at one of these "brilliant affairs," which are given on a grander scale than the "dinner parties" of other cities. We will introduce him to a table groaning under Sevres dishes and sparkling glasses of Bohemian fabric, with exquisite viands and wine, with gentlemen behind each guest dressed so like the guest himself, that guest and lackey seem stereotyped from one plate.

And yet, dear reader, is it not a mental delusion of our self-sufficient country to call this hospitality? Would it have been called hospitality in the days of our forefathers, when log-cabins possessed no door for the exclusion of strangers? Now, when door-bells and street doors interpose between private life and public, our warmth of hospitality is frozen; the dinners are savory to the palate; but they give these feasts to their friends, as dismissal to their servants, at a week's warning; and throughout the gay season they fill their drawing-rooms with guests—but does the genial spirit of hospitality prompt the giver? The guests must feed at their own time and the suggestion of their pleasure, or seek elsewhere for entertainment.

Let a friend but keep dinner waiting half an hour, and he will see. They offer him French dishes and Champagne in due season; but let him ask a slice of mutton at his need! With an apparent openness of hospitality worthy the tents of Arabia, they erase from their list of friends a man capable of requesting a crust of bread and glass of Madeira when luncheon time is past. We very much fear that there is little of the virtue that shares its bread and salt with a fellow-traveler in the desert, in this frigid hospitality.

On our last visit to the Senate, Mr. — had possession of the floor. When we entered, he was in the crisis of his speech, confounding Kansas, the

South, and slaveholders in a common detestation, passing them in review like files of leaden soldiers. This gentleman has languished, until recently, from the staggering blow his party underwent in the defeat of Mr. Fremont. In his speech, he disposed of the gravest interests of the country by a pun, and illustrated the feats and defeats of the Administration by a series of squibs.

As a speaker, his language is strong; but vituperation and personality make too much of the *matériel*.

The Message of the President was, yesterday, sent in with the Lecompton Constitution, and angry and troubled clouds are already arising upon the political horizon. In our short recollection of public life here, this seems a period of the deepest perplexity.

Mr. Brown, of Mississippi, addressed the Senate to-day in a speech of much ability, like a man who was speaking his sincere opinions, and who never spoke against his convictions. Sound argument, over and above what any one present could conceive possible, he brought into the service of his cause.

Mr. ——— occasionally threw in sharp vitriolic retorts; but he seemed hoarse, as if laboring under a sore throat.

On the conclusion of Mr. Brown, Mr. ——— pressed the Senate to death, by his lengthy sameness. It was really like hearing a tune droned through a bagpipe.

LXXVI.

SCENE IN THE HOUSE—MR. MILES'S SPEECH—MR. ORR.

WASHINGTON, MARCH, 1858.

THE angry and troubled clouds on the political horizon have condensed and darkened within the last few weeks. In all our recollections of public life here, this seems a period of the deepest perplexity. The debates are incessant and exhausting, and every casual collision becomes personal, while the most trivial play of pleasantry is embittered into an insult. The political world is wild about Kansas, and there is a general rush to the galleries to listen to discussions on this threadbare subject. We joined the crowd a few days since, and, on reaching the Capitol, the grounds before and around it presented the most animated aspect. On the broad pavement, composed of large flags of granite, might be seen knots of people hurrying rapidly up to the stately edifice, some joking as they went; while in the open space at the foot of the steps the petty trader in apples, cakes, etc., was supplying hungry mouths from his small and itinerant collection.

The rotunda above had also its throngs, though they wore a more quiet and serious air and every now and then respectfully gave way as some Senator passed along to his part of the building, nodding with condescension to such of his friends or constituents

as he recognized among the crowd. From the rotunda we caught a view of Greenough's group without, and in the public square beyond a fountain played; while above rose the granite pedestal upon whose summit towered the colossal statue of Washington. As we passed through the now deserted *Hall* for the new building, we found groups of men scattered here and there conversing with great eagerness; while in the lobby some Demosthenes of the *House* was haranguing his little knot of admiring friends, and preparing his oratorical organs for the grand battle within. In the vestibule workmen were employed upon the beautiful mosaic pavement, and the noise of their implements rose above the hum of the multitude within.

Such, dear reader, is a feeble sketch of the bustle, the gayety, the animation, the flow of life all *around* this great political arena; but we despair of giving you any conception of what is passing *within* it—of the associations which cluster *there*. We leave to abler pens to describe the wire-pulling, the exaggeration, and the detraction, the sham patriotism, the party watch-words, and the party nick-names, the finesse and the falsehoods, which are too closely identified with "life" as it passes there. But, after all, it is not essential to it; and there is to be found even there men in whose breast the voice of conscience is peremptory—men who embody all the elements and represent to the world the best results of liberty.

True, some of them are now turned topsy-turvy, and so shaken out of their harness that they do not know exactly what party they do belong to; yet we have little fear that when the test comes they will be found voting on the great *national* platform, as national men, who are responsible to their God for the way in which they vote.

“No!” “Ay!” These are four crooked marks which we call letters, and yet on every crack and crevice of those unsightly letters hang great interests. In the question now shaking the country to its centre, how should every member weigh those uncouth dungeons of a great power! “No!” “Ay!” What a crooked body for an expressive soul are these simple marks! In the present crisis these simple words become a tongue of justice, a voice of order; securing rights to our whole country, not a section of it. In the present struggle in the House there is no middle ground; no one member can isolate himself from his responsibility. These simple words are the medium through which he acts upon his country, contributing either to paralyze and lock the energies of one section, or to promote our union, peace, and harmony on all great sectional questions. To you, then, in this crisis, we call and ask you to be faithful to the *union* of these States, that our flag may never lose one star!

On entering the gallery we found it crowded with the beauty and fashion of the city. of all audiences the

most hazardous to the self-possession of a *debutant*. In a few moments after our entrance a "new member" (Mr. Poncher Miles, of South Carolina,) arose and commenced with a concise, but clear and masterly exposition of his views of the exciting question of the day. It was evident he felt keenly upon this important measure. A great principle of national right, he contended, was to live or die upon its success or defeat. He described with power the peculiar injustice of the North in this matter, and exhibited a degree of general political knowledge rarely to be found among the masters of government pens, and the blurrers of government paper. At one point he turned toward the member from Ohio, (Mr. Giddings,) and, in a tone of indignant eloquence, alluded to the false charges of that member against Southern slaveholders. His action became vehement and his eye flashed, as he put forth in blackened array the calumnious statements of that member, reprobating them with the loftiest rebuke. And yet, over and above all, there was emphatically the air, tone, and bearing of the gentleman.

His remarks produced much sensation on the Republican side of the "House," and brought Mr. G. to the floor. We will not attempt to describe the convulsive flights and exaggeration of his reply. It was characteristic of the man; but in the midst of it the Speaker's hammer descended, and the "House" was in a tempest; some dozen simultaneously

shrieking forth their respective rights to an exclusive hearing. In one direction a fire-eating member, seeming to quiver with indignation, screamed out in the healthy maturity of his lungs, "*Mr. Speaker!*" A Black Republican, foaming with no common rage, sung out "*Mr. Speaker!*" In a crimson chair, on an elevated platform, in full view of this portentous vociferation, sat the hapless object of all this clamor, a spectator of the turmoil that raged around him. The contrast was at once striking and affecting.

This confusion continued for some five minutes, and the symptoms of impending riot became momentarily more alarming, when, in a short interval of diminished uproar, one of the most prominent of the disturbers started up from his seat, and, with almost maniacal ferocity, gave out, with terrific energy, a compact, full-bodied "*Mr. Speaker!*" as if he intended calling *him* to order.

With such a state of things we should think the family of Mr. Orr would really feel uneasy, for the distinguished gentleman seems to grow deafer and deafer every day. We doubt whether he'd flinch under the broadside of a fleet of steam-frigates at a naval review.

As far as our observation extends, he is perfectly impartial. The party of the member seems to have no sort of weight with him, and to each one he gives an equal and unbiased hearing.

LXXVII.

PARTY AT THE NATIONAL HOTEL.

WASHINGTON, MARCH, 1858.

ABOUT eight o'clock on Monday evening last, we found ourself transported into the midst of an assembly of well-dressed people, in one of those brown-faced Babylons,—the National Hotel. The drawing-rooms of the National are large and well-proportioned apartments, with broad English windows which break the outline, and help to give that irregular and nooky appearance to the rooms, taking off all discomfort from their extent.

About nine o'clock the drawing-rooms were vacated for the ball-room. The ingenuity of the proprietor had converted the dining-room, or a wing of it, into a superb dancing-saloon; the familiar and harmless four-limbed inhabitants had been all expatriated and banished from their native home. A long cloud of gentlemen and lady dancers emerged on this scene of conquest with the air of Napoleon looking from the Alps on Italy. In a few minutes we knew the ball had commenced, by hearing the music, feeling the floor vibrate, and finding ourself swayed to and fro occasionally by the movements of the dancers, though we could scarcely see them. The whole vast space was one moving mass of brilliant color,

while over all, and above all, sounded gay laughter and a ceaseless hum of conversation.

Among the crowd of elegantly-dressed ladies were some two or three who were conspicuous for the extreme elegance of their toilet. Mrs. Gen. McQueen, of South Carolina, with a magnificent head-dress of pearls, not exactly like those of the fairy tale, "each as big as a hazelnut," but large enough to make a head-dress fit for a queen. A white silk, with very exquisite cherry trimmings, completed her chaste and beautiful attire. The spiritual gray eyes of this, to us, very interesting person, give a soft and feminine expression to a face which, without being beautiful in itself, is almost made so by its beauty of expression.

Mrs. Senator Brown, of Mississippi, was in a superb crimson "moire antique" with "point lace trimmings." This lady's high-bred air, with a certain look of candor, give great dignity to her appearance, while her hands and arms are those of a statue. She is so universally beloved in our city, that we may be pardoned for indulging in a little expression of enthusiasm about her.

And our darling Miss —— (we didn't say who, did we?) was there, looking as charming a little duodecimo edition of womankind as you ever saw in the library of loveliness. Poor girl! what with her lovers, foreign and domestic, young and middle aged, she has a trying time of it! The first named urge

their proposals in a calm, dogged, confident way, that seems to defy even the bare possibility of refusal. They cannot be persuaded of her being in earnest in her rejection of them, but persist for weeks in considering it a mistake. Others procure an introduction, and two or three interviews with her, after the last of which they suddenly order a hack and proceed to the cars.

At one point in the evening, a gentleman friend deserted us to go and talk politics with a little knot of middle-aged men, and we, in common with the rest of our sex, feeling that Kansas and such matters are quite sufficiently discussed in the much-enduring ears of Congress and the long-enduring pages of the *Globe*, had little patience with his defection upon so small a temptation. He had scarcely disappeared, when lo! the beautiful wife of the Senator from New Hampshire approached, leaning on the arm of the Senator from Massachusetts, Mr. Wilson, and formally presented us to that gentleman.

Our readers, we perceive, are becoming agitated when they think of our remarks on this Senator, and anticipate a terrible scene—an attack for freedom of pen or something of that sort. Not a bit of it! Not even the remotest allusion to them. No violent denunciations of the Lecompton Constitution, no fierce anathemas against Mr. Buchanan, no warning of the consequences of the present course of the Administration, but a sensible and interesting

conversation on subjects in general; a hope that we would visit Boston, a city he felt certain we should be pleased with, and (would you believe it?) a gracefully expressed compliment on our pen, implying that anything bearing our name was worthy of being written in enduring characters on pyramids.

During the progress of our conversation, it was amusing to see the astonishment of our Southern friends, who expressed, in a variety of ways, the feelings with which it impressed them. The lady of the member from South Carolina passed along with a look of grave commiseration, elegiacally feeling for her salts. The Senator from Mississippi followed with a distant bow of contemptuous disapproval; while our stately friend, the Senator from Texas, seemed to have some difficulty in believing the evidence of his eyes, seldom so inconveniently emancipated from their almost coexistent spectacles. Closing his snuffbox with a jerk of disdain, he passed on, seeming to have a very confused and imperfect notion of what it could mean.

LXXVIII.

TURKISH ADMIRAL AT THE PRESIDENT'S LEVEE.

WASHINGTON, MARCH, 1858.

A FRIEND, knowing our Oriental mania, called a few days since to communicate the certainty of the Turkish Admiral, who is temporarily in our city, being present at the coming "levee" at the Executive mansion.

So, at last, we were to see a *bona fide* Turk; we who had always looked with romantic feelings upon every "tableau" in which a slave-market was introduced! We then at last were to see a real live Turkish gentleman, an Admiral with velvet robes, satin trowsers, spangled slippers, velvet-cased scimitar, jeweled dagger, gorgeous turban, with diamond vignette and crescent! The delight of anticipation made us fail, half a dozen times, in tying an obstinate bouquet of spring violets.

We set off with a pleasant party under the guidance of one of those practical geographers called hack-drivers, and reached the White House at an early hour. As we passed in we noticed a lady playing Juliet to a handsome Romeo on the moonlit balcony without. The ladies' dressing-room presented a thronging, undulating multitude; and we do not remember further details till we found ourselves in the reception-room, where Mr. Buchanan stood ex-

changing salutations with all who approached. There is a thought we wish to speak here, but it is probably something we have no right to speak, and so we have bit our lips and crowded down the temptation. We may be allowed, however, to express our sympathy with the distinguished head of the nation, who is of such moral magnitude that he is unable to eat a sandwich without being prominent in a paragraph, and is compelled to keep his head on a continual bend by the compliments of those who are waiting for offices. Such are the penalties of Presidential dignities.

After pausing a moment in the "reception-room," we pushed our way into the "East Room," and were looking around with ill-concealed impatience, when our companion suddenly drew our attention to three male figures who were making a profound obeisance to Miss Lane. Instead of the expected vision of beauty and costliness, like a *tableau* from the Arabian Nights, our wondering eyes beheld a group of men booted and equipped as all around them, excepting the head; upon that, a red silk cap of a conical form, with a crimson tassel, was pressed down upon their brows and over their ears, scarcely showing a lock of hair. The Pacha's figure had a superior air, and he possessed a marked profile and eyes full of energetic character. The sole distinction of his costume that we observed was a splendid diamond star, with the crescent in its centre. His interpreter has a handsome expressive Italian face,

which could not be disguised even by the disfiguring *fez* worn by them all.

After clearly implying our disappointment by an expressive look, which measured their costume, from the red cap to the Parisian boots, we passed into the Green Room, which was fragrant with blossoming plants and exotics. Seating ourselves on one of the green and gold sofas, with a pile of cushions as an elbow resting-place, we turned to survey the stream of human life which flowed past. It was a brilliant scene. There were beautiful women in dresses of every description, and distinguished statesmen who bent their heads and smiled with a condescending air, while gentlemen of the diplomatic corps might be seen with the orders of their country glittering on their breasts. This circle was the most animated of all present. But most people are pleasanter in any other country than their own. Even the English, like Thames water, become brilliant and sparkling by exportation to southern latitudes. There were fashionable exquisites in all kinds of costumes; and members of the bar, the glorious bar, where gentlemen seem to live the first year or two on the red tape which secures their maiden briefs; and in the crowd there was a ray of sunshine in the shape of a beautiful child, with cheeks dimpling all over, and blue eyes floating in radiance as they looked out wonderingly from tangled masses of shining hair. And here and there you might see the curious, puz-

zled face of some plainly-dressed rustic, who had been suddenly transferred from his practical home, with its real work-day men and women, to this scene of elegance and gayety.

In the centre of a little circle of gentlemen we noticed the Secretary of War, Gov. Floyd, whose fine, open countenance carries a charm with it, and gives promise of a warm, honest heart—a promise, too, which, according to universal report, is never broken. Sympathy and kindness seem an instinct in him, founded in his very nature. He is a noble representative of a noble State.

Near us, a tall, slight figure, with a foreign air and pair of most orthodox mustaches, was cruising, with a very pretty girl, in the straits of flirtation, wasting as much sentiment as might smooth over the Kansas question or conciliate the Lecompton dilemma.

This crowd afforded comparatively but little interest, if we contemplated it merely as a crowd. But the most superficial eye recognized that it yielded a deep lesson. In the spectacle which was presented on this occasion we recognized one of the signs of our greatness as a nation. The stream of human life which flowed through the Executive mansion without challenge, illustrated the noblest privilege on the face of the globe. It was a grand thing, something which involved profound doctrines of equality, that *here* the doors were open to *all*; that *here* the humblest, poorest man in the nation had an oppor-

tunity to approach the President, with no barrier between. And this privilege is legitimately ours. Men have died in battle-fields, that we might obtain this symbol of freedom, and enjoy this consciousness of a sacred individuality.

LXXIX.

PRESIDENT'S LEVEE—A. V. BROWN, POSTMASTER-GENERAL.

WASHINGTON, MARCH, 1858.

WE reached the Executive mansion last evening amid the harmonious discords of clashing carriages, yelling hackmen, and reproofing coachmen. In the throng crowding the dressing-room there was presented the rival attractions of diamonds and pearls, white silk and blue, the "members'" wives striving to eclipse the Senators', outdressing the lady of the "Supreme Court," or throwing into the shade the less pretending government official's lady.

Well-to-do merchants' clerks, in the worst stages of dandyism, snug government clerks, and old world-worn politicians were admitted to the "Executive presence" by hundreds. Our public men seem to think it an enviable post to be President; and yet had some of those ambitious aspirants seen this distinguished gentleman last evening, even they would have thought him an object of sympathy. The people—the dear

people—reminded us of so many vultures gathered together; and bound, as the President is, to the stake of “public life,” he had no means of evading their beaks and claws. There ought to be a wall built up to defend him against incursions of such hordes of people—such masses of human beings. In the presence of the head of the nation all seem as if they have a right to be listened to; and, as if to repay themselves for insignificance elsewhere, they beset him before, behind, and around, in a way that might exhaust the patience of any human being less patient. We should not wonder if the distinguished gentleman should go into a rapid decline, to be ordered to a milder climate as a sole chance of escape; indeed, we wonder he does not at once commence milk-diet and Iceland-moss. For ourselves, we should not blame Miss Lane, if she were to hire incendiaries during some temporary absence of her uncle, and put an end to his sufferings.

As the President stood receiving, we had an opportunity to inspect his face, by the strong light of the chandelier. It was the first time we had steadily contemplated him since his inauguration, and we were forcibly struck with the havoc which those few short months had effected in his appearance. There is a cast of care and anxiety in his face that it is impossible to see without perceiving that his life is a harassing one.

There is much that enlists interest in the cha-

acter and antecedents of this venerable man. He has, through a long and distinguished career, kept his fidelity to a memory and a grave. There has been one brief, exquisite episode in his life which can never return. For him there has been no second mine of fine gold. In his envied abode the gardens at this cheerless season wear a summer aspect, creeping evergreens clothing their colonnades with verdure; yet, spite its summer beauty, it is a "drear, single man's home." To him "public life" with its stern business and heavy cares is the all in all. During his long life fair faces may have pleased his fancy, or qualities of mind attracted his admiration; but in his heart a spirit sits throned who forever bends down to listen, to watch those who would approach him, and bar them out with whispers of sorrowful comparison. When the cares of station press heavily upon him; when friends he had valued distrust him; and when he vainly struggles to avoid reproach, ah! then an angel from serener worlds, with white calm feet, and floating, moveless wings, unheard, its solemn presence only known by a soft halo on surrounding things, comes at his bidding, and, summoning his soul to leave the jarring tumults of the earth, flings wide oblivion's undreaded gates. And so to peace and silence leads the way.

Before entering the "East Room" we paused in the "Green Room," where all the furniture is subdued and in good taste, containing only chairs and sofas.

No mismatched tables of nick-nackery, nothing that recalls the curiosity-shop is to be seen. Here we found Mrs. —, absorbed in her companion's account of a faceache, caught in the recent "wet spell." As we passed along they were busy with the *embrocations*. On a French lounge a matronly committee seemed to be holding a cabinet-council concerning the number of yards necessary to bring a baby's cap to the present fashionable dimensions.

In the "East Room" all appeared in the highest spirits, laughing and talking with exuberant gayety. In the crowds pouring along may be seen a group of gentlemen who remain in stationary stateliness near the window, gazing at the panorama that revolves around them.

Dear reader, are you a disciple of "Lavater?" if so, we desire to call your attention to one of this group; a gentleman who can scarcely have passed the middle age, though frequent threads of silver mingle in his hair. No stranger could pass him by without observation. He is of stout and rather portly figure, and his face singularly open; the expression plethoric with heart and goodness. We would be willing to stake our existence on his integrity! Fatherless and brotherless, we would turn to him; and, as to distrusting his advice, we would as soon think of distrusting the Bible. Throw us out wretched and friendless on the wide world, and we would instinctively turn to that face. It is the face

of one whom men, when dying, would have as executor to their wills and guardian to their sons.

We have enlarged upon the features and aspect of this distinguished gentleman, (Hon. A. V. Brown, Postmaster-General,) because they intimate much of his mind and character. He seems to be cordially honored by all who know him for the dignity and purity of his "private life," while his published speeches awaken a generous love of what is honorable and good by illustrations drawn from the resources of a pure and lofty imagination. They also indicate an elegant taste for literature, the pursuits of a public life having evidently repressed a strong tendency to literary addictions of a high order.

He seems to possess a singularly sound and clear intellect, and is known to belong to the "moderate school" in politics.

In a close examination of "public men" here we are forcibly struck with one fact—that those most audibly violent, if we may so speak, are rarely the wisest or purest of their party. This gentleman is, we think, one who will not live in vain; and should he be removed before his time his country will miss him. Fame has already spoken of him, but we predict that the clang of her trumpet shall still more rejoice his ear.

LXXX.

SCENE IN THE HOUSE—REUNION AT THE POSTMASTER-GENERAL'S.

WASHINGTON, APRIL, 1858.

WE passed through the "Old Hall" yesterday, on our way to the "House," where we found groups of people sitting sad and silent, who, from their elongated visages, we supposed to be "Claim Agents," mourning over the close of the session.

There is something sacred and classic to us in this pillared room, with its air of antique grandeur. What conspiracies against parties have been concocted in its lobbies! What anathemas and denunciations have gone forth from its desks! Before it crumbles to dust may some appropriate historian immortalize the lights and shadows of a spot consecrated by such memories of genius and art.

We found in the House a wordy war raging, and even more than the usual hubbub. An honorable member from Illinois was employed in a personal attack upon a member from Virginia, Mr. Smith, brandishing an extract from the *Chicago Times* to give force to his eloquence.

The object of the denunciations sat with brows contracted, and bore the sledge-hammer blows dealt upon him with the desperation of an Indian at the stake, until the enraged honorable declared that the gentleman from Virginia "was not worthy to unloose

the shoes of the Senator from Illinois," when the latter sprang to his feet, and a scene of the greatest confusion followed. The Speaker, for some moments, vainly called to order. The reader may imagine the din of a cotton-mill, and he will have some idea of the rhetorical dispute of two members in the healthy maturity of their lungs. When at last quiet was restored, we learned this intellectual wonder, who was vainly trying to silence his opponent and carry him off upon his shoulders, was Mr. —, and his remarks an eloquent defence of Senator — against some alleged calumny.

It puzzles us to guess whether the tears of good angels or the mirth of bad ones must exceed while watching the progress of these disputes.

During this scene of turmoil, the immediate friends of the combatants gathered round them, while others sat at their desks looking on with the most listless indifference. At last, Mr. J. Glancy Jones—a gentleman whose excellence of character commands universal respect—arose, and, in a few sensible remarks, called the attention of the House to the business of the day. We admired what he said. The plain truth, clothed in plain language, brings conviction to the public mind far before the finest oration, studded with classical quotations and historical allusions. The people do not want to hear what was done by the Stuarts and Tudors, the Greeks and

Romans. They want to learn what the Representatives will do for them.

The Administration finds in Mr. J. Glancy Jones a strenuous supporter of no ordinary value ; and his constituents have a security that no distorted misrepresentations, no matter from whose lips they may come, will be allowed to pass in his presence without peremptory contradiction.

In the gallery the honorable member from —— was denoting to Miss —— that species of distinguishing incense which he considers due the only daughter of a millionaire. The honorable member is far too accurately aware of the value of himself and his position to dream of throwing away his attentions upon a mere fourth or fifth daughter, the list of whose brothers and sisters would be destruction to the hopes of even a millionaire. Oh, how many accounts this gentleman will have to balance with the women-world ! His character exhibits as perplexing a study as the Leaning Tower of Pisa.

A great schism arose in society here at the epoch of the Kansas Bill. During its progress in Congress, the Capulets and Montagues of the political world, *i.e.* Lecompton and anti-Lecompton, would scarcely meet in the same room ; but the moment the great measure was carried, the effervescence subsided, and Lecompton and anti-Lecompton, recollecting that, like sea and land, there must exist a junction between them, amalgamated as usual.

A delightful reunion of some dozen persons came off a few evenings since at the residence of the Postmaster-General. The Vice-President and Mrs. B., so intellectual and estimable; the newly-appointed Senator from Minnesota, Mr. Rice, and Governor Foot, were among the guests. The distinguished ex-Senator has been quite a lion here for the last two weeks, imparting a colloquial charm to every circle, just as superior in private as in public life. His small-talk seems as great as his speaking is effective; and, over and above all, he is *emphatically* the gentleman.

Miss Saunders's delightful music on the harp and piano constituted the charm of the evening. She sang songs "old as the hills," but new to us: Scotch ballads, with their touching words; merry Italian airs; with melancholy and passionate German melodies; and wound up all on the piano with a little plaintive Hindoo air. By the lovers of music the evening referred to will be long remembered.

LXXXI.

SENATE-CHAMBER—PENSION BILL.

WASHINGTON, APRIL, 1858.

WE paid a visit a day or two since to that octagon-shaped room in the Capitol which calls itself the Senate-chamber, and found that distinguished body

listening to an honorable Senator who was opposing the Widows' "Pension Bill." As the speaker resumed his seat, a slender figure arose, whose spiritual appearance presented a striking contrast to his predecessor.

This noble defender of the dead (Mr. Jeff. Davis) began by sweeping away the heap of argument with which his opponent had encumbered the subject. He brought facts for his facts, and answers for his captiousness. He spoke with all his usual loftiness, but with more than his usual feeling, as he reviewed the character of the dead men whose families asked for relief. He showed in a striking light the hardships of a soldier's life; that he had learned from experience that it was something more than to sit niched in an arm-chair, session after session, and say "Ay" or "No" from a commodious morocco dormitory. He showed that magnanimity to the widows and orphans of those who shed their blood in behalf of their country was an instinct, a virtue, that should be to men as high above physical considerations as the heavens are above the earth. If not, we must acknowledge ourselves unworthy to hold a name among nations. As he proceeded, his keen eye seemed to blaze, his form swayed to and fro, rising, bending, leaning over the desk before him, with that polished grace for which Mr. Clay was so remarkable.

It was a warm, honest outpouring of indignant

eloquence in defence of the dead, and in behalf of widows and orphans. We always fancy we are in the presence of Mr. Clay when this gentleman rises to speak, and we always contemplate him with the feeling of respect which all entertained for that lamented and illustrious statesman, whom, we think, in many respects, he very much resembles. The unfortunate and the friendless always find in him an eloquent champion. There are those who owe all their success to his generous and prompt indorsement when they were friendless and unknown.

In the gallery we were seated next a dear, darling old Quaker lady from Pennsylvania, on her first visit to Washington, whose sympathies seemed to be deeply enlisted by Mr. D.'s evident ill-health, as well as his generous vindication of the claims of her sex. She wept during his speech, and, on its conclusion, inquired of us where he resided, and added, in the most earnest, truthful way, that she would call on Mrs. D. and suggest that he should drink London Brown Stout, and retire from public life until he should regain flesh and strength; adding, with an inimitable *naïveté* of manner, "Poor man, I hope if his wife is left alone in the world she will find some one to speak for her!" We judged, from her remarks, that she was herself a widow.

Passing over from the Senate-chamber, we found the House in a tempest, a jargon, unequalled since the confusion of Babel, which seemed compounded

of all the tongues of ancient and modern Europe, to the utter oblivion of the predominant cry of "Mr. Speaker!" pronounced with frantic activity by some twenty voices simultaneously.

LXXXII.

PARTY AT LORD NAPIER'S—FUNERAL OF MISS DAHLGREEN.

WASHINGTON, APRIL, 1858.

SOME two months since, Lord Napier gave one of the most elegant parties of the season. It was a *fête* of rare brilliancy. Coroneted carriages deposited their inmates at his door, and the pompous butler admitted group after group of our distinguished citizens. There were elegant women in jeweled tiaras, and fair girls with gossamer dresses floating like misty veils around their figures.

Among the guests on that occasion was one who was strikingly conspicuous, a young daughter of a resident citizen, Captain Dahlgreen, of the Navy. She was a slender girl, exquisitely graceful, with a lovely coral mouth, eyes of the softest, meekest violet, and a face shaded with long golden ringlets like floating rays of sunshine. She seemed like one to whom God had given the power by personal loveliness to produce a living impression of the imagery of heaven, even here amid the earthly darkness of

our life. It was her first appearance in society, and she was simply dressed in white, with natural flowers on her bosom, so purely, freshly beautiful, that they were fit emblems of the one they adorned. By general acclamation, she was pronounced the loveliest of that brilliant crowd, and as such, was selected by Lady Napier to open the festivities of the evening. Many who saw her on that occasion felt that the glittering eyes, the prominent veins around the temples, the transparent complexion, indicated but too plainly the signs of the malady which would insidiously terminate her pure existence.

A few brief weeks have passed away, and Lizzie Dahlgreen was again a strikingly conspicuous object in a large assembly of the young and beautiful, who had collected in the hall and in the parlors of her father's residence. But there was no music, no joyful hilarity: an awful stillness reigned around. The window-shutters were closed; every one spoke in whispers, and the attendants moved about stealthily and cautiously, as if they feared to wake one who lay in slumber. The stillness and solemn hush of death was there, instead of the jubilee of mirth; the oppressive silence which follows the falling asleep of those whom no earthly sound shall ever rouse again. Dim as the light was in the rooms, a beam had contrived to find its way through the draperies of the windows, lighting up a fine old painting on the wall, and leaving a dash of brightness on

a rosewood coffin which stood in the centre of the room. Her young companions of former occasions are again around her with swollen eyes and quivering lips. Approach with us, dear reader, and we will contemplate her now, as we did then. She looks as lovely *now* as in the *recherché* toilet in which we last beheld her. Flowers, fresh flowers, deck her bosom, and a coronal of spring blossoms rests against her waxen temples. The same high, fair forehead, with the blue veins crossing it,—but the light golden curls are pushed far back and gathered up into a knot behind. The lids are drawn down over the soft shy eye, the long lashes rest on the cheek, and the strange smile that curves her lips has none of the sadness bathing the shut eyelids. The same transparently fair complexion, but there is the faintest tinge of blue instead of the warm, generous heart-tide which belonged to it on the former occasion. The white hands lay as they have been placed—their tapering tips crossing each other on her still bosom.

Oh what a wealth of love, and youth, and hope, and joy lie in that coffin! What sweet attributes of gentleness, modesty, and kindness!

As the deep, rich voice of Dr. Cummins falls upon the ear, "*I am the resurrection and the life,*" soblike bursts of grief mingle with the sound, and her companions turn away, leaving tears upon the icy cheeks and forehead.

As we write, the sunset lays rosy and still on the public grounds; the trees and shrubbery stretch far away, edged with a golden gleam and a fringe of shadows. The lilac-trees and the dewy-edged violets that have been the friend of her childish years, from which many a nosegay has been enriched, wave in the sunshine and smile up at the soft, blue sky; dew-spangled buds are peeping out in every direction, life waking all around; but for sweet Lizzie Dahlgreen, the still, silent grave!

And yet there is a pause in sorrow, when we think that she, who has dropped quietly into the grave as a leaf to the ground, is in heaven. The passing away of this sweet spirit gives a new attractiveness to that bright home whither she has gone. In that better world of glory, whose mysteries of companionship we are not allowed to penetrate, she will indeed hear that beloved voice which, as the haze of death stole over her, sounded in her ear, *I hear my mother calling me!* What visions of beatific happiness must have passed before her dying gaze!

“There, loving eyes are to the portals straying;
There, arms extend, a wanderer to enfold;
There, waits a dearer, holier One, arraying
His own in spotless robes and crowns of gold.”

P. S.—Miss D. was the niece of Mr. Dahlgreen, of Natchez, Mississippi.

LXXXIII.

SCENE IN THE HOUSE.

WASHINGTON, MAY, 1858.

POETS have conspired for years to deck May with sunshine and freshness. "May" is indeed a violet-scented word, which causes the most unimaginative reader to dream of green fields. Alas! for our sad reality of this month of flowers!

We have the month of May, it is true, but not Chaucer's,—warm, poetical, sunny, fresh, conveying the heavy perfume of honeysuckles and violets. *Our* May is chilly; one moment the sun is out in his brightness; the next, raining as if the world was threatened with a second deluge, the gutters swelling into brooks, every hollow in the street a pool, and every spout an avalanche.

This state of the weather renders the close and poisonous atmosphere of the House and Senate more endurable; and, in company with a friend, we determined, last week, to brave its stifling heat once more.

We found an "honorable member," on the Republican side of the House, rattling on in a speech full of denunciations of Mr. Buchanan, the fiercest anathemas against those who were supposed to be favorable to him, and tremendous warnings to Northern members to beware of permitting themselves

to be influenced in their course out of any false complaisance to the Administration.

We think these side-thrusts were intended for Mr. English, whose defection seems to affect the Republican members variously, according to their previous estimate of his probity. Many declare they blush for his infidelity to his party, others never would have thought it, and others all along expected it. We sat aghast at the speaker's universal knowledge. Why, he unveiled the remotest secrets of the firmament; coolly analyzed volcanoes, as though their glowing lava were soap-suds! No mine so deep, no ocean so vast, but his mind compassed it round about, or dived into its darkest recesses. Finally, he came back to "bleeding Kansas" and the rights of the people, and, at last, broke down, (looking daggers toward the White House,) to the satisfaction of his impatient listeners.

At the end of this debate up started another speaker, who, having nothing to say, was manly and candid; he gave credit to his adversaries and took credit to himself, and then the motion before the House was withdrawn.

While all this was going on, some consulted a book, and some their ease; some yawned, a few slept; and, on the whole, there was an air about this tempestuous body which can be witnessed in no other in America. Even the most indifferent looked as if he would come forward if the occasion should demand

him; and the most imbecile, as if he could serve his country if it required him.

Passing over to the Senate, we found Mr. — on the floor. The amiability of this gentleman is very remarkable. Exposed in the Senate to the broadsides of a powerful opposition, he never loses his patience. His temper seems a sort of granite, upon which they may hammer for hours without eliciting a spark. He is one of the heavy pieces of ordnance invaluable to his party in certain emergencies. When vexatious questions are presented by Democrats, he is always ready to rise and generalize with plausibilities, while the stunned party recovers its senses and gathers itself up for a reply; a sort of moral *point d'argue*, giving breathing space to the solos. It is difficult to rate too highly this species of impassibility in a public man. In the Senate or House he whose shrinking susceptibility betrays his vulnerable point attracts such incessant showers of arrows that he has neither leisure nor self-possession for the accomplishment of his party-purposes.

LXXXIV.

BRILLIANT ENTERTAINMENT AT LORD NAPIER'S ON VICTORIA'S
BIRTHDAY.

WASHINGTON, MAY, 1853.

A BRILLIANT entertainment to celebrate Victoria's birthday, came off last evening at the residence of

the British Ambassador, Lord Napier. It was prefaced by a week's announcement, and, during that period, the *fair* world were on the *qui vive*, seeming to fancy that this *fête* was intended as a sort of beauty review.

We reached the house about ten o'clock, the door of which was opened with prodigious *eclat*, to its extreme extent, by an English butler with a general aspect of great dignity. At the head of the staircase a group of attendant servants stood in waiting to usher the guests into what a New York advertisement would call a "lofty dressing-room," fitted up, *not* "à la Louis XIV.," for there was a *homelike* air of *domestic* elegance there which was *not* Parisian. By the side of a broad, full-length mirror, which swung on silver hinges, was a dressing-case, with all the implements, mounted in massive silver, and engraved with the coronet and initials of Lady Napier. In a tiny rosewood book-rack, reposed half a dozen miniature volumes, which, on glancing over, we found to be a Bible, "Practical Religion," "Mount of Olivet," "Paradise of the Christian Soul," "Life of Dean Ramsey," "A Child's Catechism," and the "Christian Year."

Ninia Napier was written in a clear, Italian hand, on the fly-leaf of each volume.

This will let our distant readers into some knowledge of the character of the gentle occupant of that mansion. On descending to the reception parlor,

we found Lady Napier, (the Ninia of the dressing-room,) in an exquisite dress of *mousseline de soi*; her hair encircled with a wreath of water-lilies, and surmounted by a dazzling tiara of diamonds and emeralds intermingled. Though by this time familiarized somewhat with the aspect of fashionable life here, we were not prepared for the brilliant scene that now awaited us. The thrones and principalities of Europe shone forth in all the splendor of full "Court dress." Near an exquisite alabaster bust of Washington Lord Napier stood, in a costume that glittered with gold lace, wrought in the most gorgeous and elaborate manner; while not far off the Ambassador of the Imperial "Court of Russia" (Baron Stoeckl) appeared in a coat magnificently decorated with silver lace, and a slouched drawing-room hat, ornamented with a curled ostrich plume. Louis Napoleon's distinguished mouth-piece presented a still more striking and characteristic aspect, with a bright cherry-colored badge, which crossed a coat that literally blazed with imperial "stars" and "orders."

Among the throng of *attachés* of the different legations, who are fated to progress, like a child learning its alphabet, from capital to capital, we notice the stately figure of the Secretary of the British Embassy, Mr. Hope, late a gallant officer in the Crimea, whose left breast was studded with medals, the gift of the Queen, for his bravery in

some action. The lady of this gentleman is very lovely in person, with soft eyes gracing a countenance worthy alike of a diamond coronet or a garland of roses.

Representatives of the army and navy—commanders and captains—were in full uniform; and, with the waving of plumes, resplendence of uniforms, blazing of diamonds, and glitter of foreign stars and orders, nothing could be more imposing. In the music-room, allured by the air of *God Save the Queen*, we found material for a book of beauty in as many volumes as there are novels of Mr. James. The spirit of beauty might have been pleased to sit invisibly on one of the gilded chairs there. To the pure and true eye that appreciates the divinity of the form after which woman is made, it were a feast to see the perfection of shape, color, motion, and countenance there. Complexions which betrayed their transparency in the flood of softened light which streamed through ground-glass shades; lips in which the blood was translucent, and cheeks finer-grained than alabaster. Female beauty must have been in less perfection at Athens, in the days of *Lais*, than in that music-room.

Among the fairest who were soon moving to the music of the "Lancers," was the lady of the Senator from Illinois, so eminent in beauty that, even amid this throng of loveliness, she could be distin-

guished as a planet is distinguishable in the starriest sky. The light fell full upon the heavenly shape and whiteness of her shoulders and bust, displaying a form worthy to realize the poet's dream of Cleopatra.

Mrs. ——— was attended by Mr. Bantinetti, in full Court dress,—a gentleman who manœuvres the international relations between Sardinia and America. Near him might be seen the interesting family of a distinguished member from Virginia, (Mr. Faulkner,) the mother in a dress of blue silk, with superb flounces of Mecklin lace, and the two daughters (one a young married lady) in exquisite dresses of white illusion, which encircled their figures like snow-wreaths. The young, bright, innocent-looking face of the younger sister impressed us with admiration of its freshness and purity.

Among the guests we saw the genial face of the Speaker of the House, Mr. Orr, who, when he throws aside the toga of public life, throws it off completely; and Miss Lane, in white, with a lovely wreath of white clematis encircling her hair; and the Vice-President, Mr. Breckenridge, who passes for one of the best bred men in Washington; and Mrs. B., the gentlest of wives and mothers. Mr. Russell, a fine-looking man, in Court dress, an *attaché* of the English Legation, and nephew of Lord John Russell, attracted much attention. Mr. R. speaks with elegance several languages, and is known as a fine

singer. Mrs. Pringle, of Charleston, appeared in a robe of very elegant material, the flounces edged with lemon-colored velvet. We also observed the member from South Carolina, Gen. McQueen, who is prominent in our social circles as a *good husband*, an unfashionable qualification, perhaps, but one which we cannot help respecting. We noticed the eminent banker, Mr. Riggs, of the firm of Corcoran & Riggs, a gentleman whose word is able to influence the Exchange of any city on this continent, and in whose strong boxes are deposited half the title-deeds of half the millionaires in our country.

The beau of the evening was (guess who?) *not* the refined and gentlemanly member from Charleston; nor his dashing colleague, who can interpret the elevation of an eyebrow and the curl of a lip; nor the bachelor from North Carolina, who has so recently become a fraction of the Senate, and wears his dignities with becoming gravity,—*not* one of these reigning stars, but William Napier, a beautiful boy of eleven years, whose gallantry might be copied by the bearded children. •

“Oh! may those enshrouded years
Whose fair dawn alone appears,—
May that brightly budding life,
Knowing yet no sin or strife,
Bring its store of hoped-for joy,
Mother, to thy mild-eyed boy,
And the good thou dost impart
Lie deep-treasured in his heart.”

An intellectual-looking person in plain black cloth, the English tutor of Lord N.'s sons,—who, we are told, is an “M.A.,” which must mean something very incomprehensible, for we have never been able to interpret the letters otherwise than “More Anon,” —is of promised preferment.

We recognized among the guests the refined face of the Secretary of the Navy, Mr. Toucey, whose private character presents a model of excellence for public men.

There was also present Mr. Lamar, of Mississippi, whose maiden speech during the present winter made a decided sensation; and Commodore Breese, of the Navy, with whom we had a chat on that engrossing subject—the Navy Bill; and Mrs. Crittenden, in a superb “moire antique” of the most delicate pea-green tint, with point-lace Bertha.

We might speak of the elegance displayed in the arrangements of the supper-room, the glittering vista of silver plate, and the more than epicurean daintiness of the delicacies. The wine was such as the gallant Ambassador from Mexico (in Court dress of crimson and gold, with drawing-room *chapeau*) declared superior to all his past experience, and a Spanish *attaché* protested that the Port must have been subtracted from his own Peninsular cellars.

We regret that indisposition prevented us from giving our readers a description of a brilliant *Soirée Musicale* given by Lady Napier on the evening of

the first of May. The spacious drawing-room was converted into a temporary concert-room, with some twenty performers. Beautiful airs from *Traviata* and *Ernani* were performed with thrilling effect. The company owe much to the musical taste of Lady N. in this fine *recherché* affair.

LXXXV.

BRIDAL PARTY AT JUDGE BLACK'S, ON THE OCCASION OF HIS
DAUGHTER'S MARRIAGE.

WASHINGTON, MAY, 1858.

A PORTION of our fashionable world have been for the last month excited to the highest pitch of eagerness in preparation for Mrs. Gwin's "fancy ball." Many of our ladies have exhausted themselves in elegant conceits for the occasion. Dresses of every description, in the shape of brocaded skirts, satin basques, black mode and lace shawls, have been by armfuls laid under contribution. Maids have been summoned to give information respecting the resources of hid-away trunks, and select committees appointed in the homes of the young and beautiful. Many a fair exclusive continued to lisp her declaration "that she had not made up her mind with respect to her costume," many days after the said costume had been snugly deposited in her drawers.

On the evening of the eighth of April the dressing-rooms of our city exhibited scenes like those we fancy rising up at the spell of a magical incantation—visions of men and women celebrated in times of fiction and fact—goddesses and heroes, shepherdesses and hunters, crusaders and nobles, kings and queens; costumes of every nation, whose wearers would probably have scorned the idea of bending in homage before the crowned head of the greatest of earth's potentates. It was understood that the most elaborate preparations had been made to render the affair brilliant; that all countries, and climes, and ages, were to be depicted; representatives of every class and condition—Arabs and Indians, Circassians and Turks, Jews and Gipsies; Senators of ancient Rome; judges and Inquisitors; soldiers and spruce counselors-at-law. These, it was said, would mingle in amicable intercourse with beings who have their dwellings in regions where no geographer has intruded. Sylphs and fairies, with creatures who hold a kind of half-way existence between the imaginary and the material.

All these were on this evening to start into life; to produce, we should think, a bewilderment like that with which one looks upon a large assembly engaged in a dance which has no music to govern its movements. Some maternal scruples having kept us from this gay scene, we cannot give our readers a description of the costumes, which we understand

were very elegant; but as some compensation, we will transport them to a brilliant bridal party given at the residence of the Attorney-General, Judge Black, in compliment to his daughter, who has just returned from her bridal tour.

The bride and groom present a striking contrast: she gentle and delicate; he of a stately figure and imposing presence, with a look of moral and intellectual elevation. He is the son of ex-Governor Shunk, of Pennsylvania.

The assemblage met to greet this interesting couple is one of the most *recherché* of the season. Our eye falls upon nearly all the excellences of the diplomatic world,—French, English, Spanish, Danish, Russian, and Austrian,—all engaged in conversation on the late European political combination. Some speculating on the acquittal of Bernard, which the mouth-piece of the French Emperor declares will serve as an excellent coral to assist the dentition of teething conspirators.

In another direction we see Mrs. Slidell, in a flowing dress of black velvet, with a superb bandeau of pearls binding down her raven hair, like a queen; and sweet Lily M., with a shower of brown curls falling over her comb to her waist; and the lady of the Secretary of the Interior, with *Mechlin lace* flounces falling over a rich blue silk dress; and the lady of the Senator from Kentucky, with her perfect *coiffure*, her air of society, her easy manners;

and the amiable lady of the Secretary of the Treasury, in a superb blue *moire antique*.

Among the guests were a group of smiling members, the inward hilarity consequent upon the morning's gain of the *Conference Committee* in the House having changed their faces so that they looked really handsome. Among these last we see the "member" from Tennessee, (Col. Savage,) who is known in the House as a working-member, at home on all the subjects that come into daily question there, and begrudging no labor for the good of his constituents. For the details of representative business, he is perhaps one of the most competent on the floor of that body.



LXXXVI.

SCENE IN THE SENATE-CHAMBER—THE KANSAS VOTE.

WASHINGTON, MAY, 1858.

THE announcement in the morning papers yesterday, that the final vote on the Kansas question would be taken during the day, attracted the deepest interest throughout our city. Many prepared to be present at a crisis which involved so much, and, at an early hour, private equipages, with servants in livery, might be seen passing rapidly up the Avenue, and, on the sidewalks, numerous pedestrian groups, all bound to the same spot. As we entered the

Capitol gate, we could not but be struck with the placid beauty of the grounds, decked in the emerald hue of spring. Around us stretched beautiful beds, in which bloomed plants of every hue, peeping from their leafy and glassy coverts. Above rose the stately columns of the Capitol, with its statue-crowned niches, backed by the distant hills; and, in the farther distance, the warm sun shone brightly over the roofs of the city. We found all the lounging places of the building crowded, and on the countenances of the curious idlers a more earnest expression than usual.

In the Senate-chamber every cranny of the ladies' gallery was entirely filled, and the entrance completely blocked up; it had, indeed, been crowded, several hours previous to the commencement of the business of the day, to an extent almost unprecedented. As the eye ranged around, it met nearly all the beauty and intelligence of the metropolis. The spring attire of our own sex—the gayety of which resembled some gaudy flower-bed; the rustling of silks; the light laughter and lighter chat, presented a picturesque scene. In one direction might be seen the lovely face of the lady of the young Senator from Alabama, from the pure transparency of her skin, and the slender gracefulness of her figure, looking for all the world like that most spiritual of all flowering things, the lily of the valley. In another direction we saw the distinguished mouth-

piece of England's Queen,—a gentleman who saves her gracious majesty the trouble of communicating her speaking-trumpet from one continent to the other; not far off, Mrs. Crittenden's amiable face; and near her, the lady of Senator B——, of Mississippi.

These external features are easily told; but upon the floor below, the dignified assembly, which calls itself a great deliberative body, was considerably out of order. There seemed an unusual movement and excitement. Senators talked in knots and groups; others seemed, even in the midst of this stirring commotion, to be lost in an abstract and distant reverie. On the southern side of the chamber numbers were gathered around a pale, ghastly-looking figure, his eye bandaged with strips of white linen, his whole aspect presenting an appearance of feebleness and debility. This gentleman (Mr. Jeff. Davis) had come out for the first time, since his illness, to vote on this important measure. In another direction his colleague, Gov. Brown, with a flushed and excited face, was pacing, with Senator Toombs, the space back of the Speaker's chair, from end to end. No field was ever better quartered by well-trained pointers, thoroughly masters of their work, than that crimson carpet was by those two distinguished Senators. But it seemed not to avail them what they sought, for at length the former threw himself languidly and discontentedly into a chair.

On the opposite side of the chamber the aspect of things seemed ominous. Mr. Hale's jovial face was overcast with the most sombre expression, as if he were meditating suicide.

We like to see a good broken heart or so, among the sterner sex, now and then; and if the Kansas result should make Mr. H. a victim, we hope he will retire to the Great Desert, and live upon locusts and wild honey, for the change could not be borne here.

Mr. —, of Wisconsin, with innumerable nods and rapid utterances, was explaining something to Mr. Seward, upon whose face a look of inscrutable thought was resting. We could not but be struck with the bitterness expressed in the angry and menacing look cast from one side of the chamber to the other. It was a melancholy sight to see two sections of one great country standing in deadly opposition—antagonistic principles; and our thoughts involuntarily recurred to the nations of the earth that have passed away. How long may the ambassadors of foreign countries say of us “you are a great people, and have great power?”

Gov. Brown followed Mr. — in a few able remarks, depicting forcibly the importance of having this bill passed at once, adding that, although he did not approve of its features, yet the neglect of other important business was so protracted, by its continuing to agitate Congress, that he appealed to members

to aid by their vote to get rid of this annoying and harassing question.

We may add, the vote was not taken until the following day.

LXXXVII.

CHILDREN'S MAY-BALL.

WASHINGTON, MAY, 1858.

THE ball at Carusi's Saloon! It was a great event, and the seventh day of this month of flowers was a day of days to the juvenile population of Washington. The morning dawned cheerily, but as the day advanced a cloud began to float near the horizon. First it was white as snow, then its base became a faint slate color, then it gradually enlarged and darkened. Big drops came splashing down faster and faster, till they at length fell in sheeted rain. As evening approached, many a childish face was wistfully turned toward the darkening horizon. But the rain continued, though its violence subsided, so that holiday dresses were donned without much dread of being spoiled. Carusi's Saloon was adorned with such a profusion of flowers as to have the appearance of being fit for those sylvan nymphs who were so abundant in the days of yore, or for those fairy elves who crouch within the lids of sleeping flowers. The vernal throne erected for the coronation rites

was almost hidden in leaves. Two flights of steps, covered with green cloth,—one on each side,—led up to this elevation, and a chandelier suspended above mingled its lustre with the lights burning beneath.

At eight o'clock a long train of youthful forms entered the hall, marching with due dignity and deliberation up the spacious apartment to the coronation bower.

What rosy ranks of childish loveliness! Why, there was material for a book of beauty in as many volumes as there are novels of Mr. James!

Leading this bright array appeared the queen of the festival, who had been elected by the unanimous voice of her companions to the honors of the occasion. No queen, surrounded by her court, ever bore a loftier presence, or carried herself more royally, than this fair girl, who looked indeed like the royal bride of spring, in her white dress and regal blossoms. A "May queen" is neither vanity nor amusement proof, and as she ascended the steps she peeped over her shoulder, to see that the silky ringlets were doing no discredit to their dainty resting-place, and then drew up her neck with a stately air. Oh, how she was envied that evening! how simple-hearted children lamented the vulgarity of American society! "*Such a queenly air,*" sighed a little cherry-checked thing; and "*Such an air,*" came the echo from lip after lip, with a half-lisp'd finis from a baby-pet.

Queenly ceremonies were followed by an air from the band, which was the signal for dancing to commence, and soon the young masters and misses were bounding away in those fancy dances in which their teacher excels. A handsome, graceful boy, in polka costume, appeared whirling round to that bewitching tune a little gipsy-looking girl, with wild locks the shade of the bird that sat over Poe's chamber-door. These were followed by another in costume with castanets, who went through this elaborate dance in a style of artistic elegance rarely equaled. *La Cracoviennne* was exquisitely danced by the veriest sunbeam that ever gladdened this weary world with beauty and with light. We would hardly have wondered, as she glided through the figures "with the step of a fawn and the glance of a star," to have seen fresh flowers spring suddenly up in her way wherever on the happy earth those fairy footsteps fell.

"Dancing! oh, I love, I love to see
The motion light of anything that's free!
The bird mounts upward on exulting wing,
The brook leaps laughing from its crystal spring."

The little *crown-bearer* was a lovely child of six years, with large soft eyes and fair hair, which fell in light curls nearly to her waist. Her male companion, the *sceptre-bearer*, a plump, laughing urchin, who seemed fully to appreciate the artless sweetness of his little friend. Before the party broke up we

witnessed, in the cloaking-room, the assiduous devotion of this same little crown-bearer's companion. He smoothed back her glossy, clustering curls, tied the strings under her dimpled chin; and then—would you believe it?—(I know you won't, for the fact seems too great an enormity,) attempted to kiss the sweet, smiling mouth. The little coquette in miniature showered her sunny hair over her eyes, and put her dimpled hands upon her lips; but the laughing boy stole the kiss nevertheless, evincing a perseverance which bearded children do not disdain sometimes to imitate.

The ceremony of the coronation was performed by one of the girlish throng, who encircled the brow of her "royal highness" with a crown of rose-buds.

For ourselves, it carried us back into the past, and shadowy reminiscences of the earlier days of our own summer came creeping over our mind.

Yes, it was one of those quiet country seats which are the pleasantest spots in Delaware, that we had won and worn our laurels as *May Queen*. Ah! again we see the gathering groups of children upon the velvet lawn in the "ambrosial darkness of broad-branching elms." We can yet feel the warm sunshine of that quiet day; we, chiefest of all, saluted, as we passed, by the homage of admiring glances. We hear still sounding the girlish voices that rang gayly and festally that day; and how shall we forget the exquisite delight and excitement with

which we received the coronal of flowers, and ascended the rural throne, almost hidden in leaves and flowers, over which the trees arched and walled with green. In that moment, almost crushed with blooming honors, we did not envy Victoria, nor believe that a sweeter triumph was ever won.

Ah! that soft, country day, and we the focus of a hundred girldish eyes—the memory of that day makes May in our mind forever!

About nine o'clock, at a signal from the teacher's telescopic eye, a childish form appeared, so light, so pure, so airily graceful, that we held our breath to see. Bending her head, and with her spiritual eyes upturned as if in waiting rapture, a strain of low music rose softly on the air, and she commenced the difficult dance of *La Sylphide*, with an air of childish elegance rarely seen. Her diminutive feet, as she glided through the figure, scarcely touched the floor; and as she sprang, flying away to the livelier measures of the band, they were scarcely visible, fluttering indistinctly like humming-birds' wings. That child's image remains in our mind like that of the Madonna in the oratory of a religious devotee.

Turning from the bright and happy faces of the children, we met on every side the delighted looks of their parents, or brothers and sisters, who formed a large portion of the spectators; for this festival, though nominally and by custom given to children, is witnessed and enjoyed by those of older growth.

The joyous troops of youthful dancers, before eleven o'clock arrived, were resigned into the hands of servants in waiting, and in a little while were at home, no doubt soundly sleeping, dancing in dreams at a *May ball* that had no ending, and with tireless partners.

LXXXVIII.

EVENING PARTY TO MR. EVERETT AT LORD NAPIER'S.

WASHINGTON, JUNE, 1858.

As people on the point of death often make a desperate rally, so this, the most brilliant of seasons, is even more lively as it approaches its end. Small select evening parties and dinners succeed each other with the rapidity of the final scenes in a pantomime.

One of the most brilliant of these parties came off last evening at the mansion of the English Minister, Lord Napier, given in compliment to Mr. Everett, who leaves to-day for the South. Suspended in the dressing-room to which our party were shown by an English footman in canary-colored livery, was a beautiful family group of Lady N. and children, the extreme delicacy of outline and tint plainly indicating that it was from Brady's masterly hand. On descending, we found in the lofty suite of rooms a choice assembly of persons of the highest consideration, from whom all the stiffness of metropolitan so-

ciety seemed to have disappeared. It would be a task worthy of the New York *Illustrated News* to illustrate the superb apartment we entered—a miniature “East Room,” its walls graced with a full-length portrait of Queen Victoria represented at the climax of youthful loveliness, in crown, sceptre, and royal robes.

The air of this delightfully-ventilated room was fragrant with a superb vase of rare flowers, which formed a conspicuous object on a flower-stand in the centre of the room, their bright hues and fragrant odors gratefully repaying the attention lavished upon them. The soft light from clusters of wax candles fell upon a hundred gorgeous objects, magnificent vases, marble tables, canary-colored damask curtains, and all the splendid *pietra dura* and *marqueterie*. But there was one permanent inhabitant of this mansion far more interesting to us than the downy softness of the rich carpet under our feet, or the glitter of the splendid lustres over our head, or the rich nothings which surrounded us on every side. It was the gentle hostess, who, with a wreath of white and crimson japonicas encircling her head, and in a rich white silk, embroidered in rosebuds, moved among her guests.

In the centre of a group of gentlemen and ladies stood Mr. Everett, placid and serene as usual. After an interesting conversation with this gentleman, we turned to survey the faces about us.

Here was the lady of the distinguished Senator from Kentucky, Mrs. Crittenden, all the political and diplomatic world flocking to compliment and congratulate her on the very able speech of her husband, made in the Senate during the day. Here, too, was Sir Gore Ouseley, with his somewhat husky, downright *naïveté* of manner; and the bachelor member from South Carolina, Col. Keit, devoted to the society of the ladies, and knowing how to turn every woman's head without ever losing his own. Apropos of the "bachelor members," they must look to their laurels, for a new Richmond has appeared upon the field—a member from Charleston, who threatens to take the sceptre from their grasp. And here, too, we see the daughter of the high-minded Senator from our own little State, Mabel Bayard, of Delaware, in a double dress of tulle, looking so nymphlike; and her lovely mother, who wins all hearts by the engaging gentleness of her character. Ah! they carry us back to our early home, and to the violets and marigolds on the Brandywine, and the woods in that rustic solitude where all was green, and still, and sweet, or where the only sound was falling water or fluttering birds! No more, ah! never more to us those happy hours shall return!

Here, too, is the lady of the distinguished Senator from California, Mrs. Gwin, dressed with a richness and elegance which even the fastidious *William* could not tax with an error of taste; and not far off is Gen.

Harney, with one of the favorites of society here, (Miss Pleasonton,) on his arm. And here, too, is our sweet friend, Miss Saunders, still the same graceful, kind-hearted girl; her nature as heartfelt and genuine as when she arrived here. And the lady of the Brazilian Minister, Madame Albeynerz; her face might not satisfy a critical eye, but its expression is to us exquisitely lovely, and her manners eminently prepossessing. The daughter of this lady has a classical Italian face, which recalls to our mind statues and fountains, fair columns and dim aisles in foreign churches. And here, too, is Mrs. Zulee, one of the three beautiful daughters of a former Postmaster-General, Mr. Wickliffe, with eyes shaped and colored as we see them in Raphael's lovely pictures. And the Attorney-General, with his fine Pennsylvania constitution, and his large, strong, and warm heart; and his gentle daughter, with her glossy ringlets, she is *not* here.

Yes, dear reader, we have had a *love match* in Washington, a quiet, cozy family-wedding, the President and niece the only guests,—and the Attorney-General's daughter is Miss Black no longer. While flattered and sought after by the gay world, the private Secretary of her father, a young gentleman with little but fine talents and estimable qualities, carried off the prize which others were striving to win. Sweet girl! may the fire on her domestic altar never burn dim; may she keep all home feel-

ings pure and sacred; and may the chain of love that passes round her home never be tarnished by the breath of coldness or contention!

LXXXIX.

SOCIAL PARTIES—SCENE IN THE HOUSE ON THE TEST VOTE ON
THE KANSAS QUESTION.

WASHINGTON, JUNE, 1858.

WHAT in Washington are technically designated "*evening receptions*" we are no longer compelled to endure, but have agreeably substituted small social parties. One of the most delightful of these came off at the residence of the accomplished correspondent of the New Orleans *Delta*, Mr. Evans, a gentleman who was the bearer of the "Clarendon Treaty," and has had commissions of great trust reposed in him by our government.

On entering the parlors at an early hour, we found a circle of charming people. There was Sir Gore Ouseley, tall and robust, who, it is said, can trace his family through a hundred years of English kings.

And there, too, was the lady of the Postmaster-General, Mrs. A. V. Brown, in a rich blue satin dress, with superb flounces of point lace—lace which a Pope, in his highest day of festival, might have coveted. But it is not on her richness of dress or

her personal beauty that our pen delights to dwell when referring to this inestimable woman. We would like, dear reader, if we could, without infringing on the sacredness of private intercourse, to speak of the personal qualities of one of the noblest and best of her sex—one who, as a mother, wife, and friend, stands, we think, without a rival. We hope this will not be regarded as merely the impression of our partiality or enthusiasm. All who are admitted to a view of her inner-life will say the same. The women of Tennessee may feel proud of her, for she reflects credit upon that noble State, and is rich in qualities of heart that truly place her above the majority of her sex.

And Lady Ouseley was there, with a winning elegance of manner which could not fail to gain attention; and her sister, Mrs. Judge Roosevelt, of New York, a queenly-looking woman in velvet and diamonds.

There, too, we found the veritable *Jack Hayes*, looking as if he were fit to reconquer Texas, and a lady at his side, as if she were worthy to reward him for his valor. And not far off the beautiful wife of Senator Dickson, from Connecticut's bleakest bound, who is reveling in what she calls our Southern clime; and her young friend from New Jersey, with turquoise ornaments, and a blue garland which particularly becomes her Saxon beauty. Beside this *belle blonde* we found our charming friend of the Cabinet

coterie, who goes about breaking hearts, and leaving other people to pick up the bits.

On a sofa the stately Senator from Texas (Gen. Houston) sat, absorbed in the contemplation of a *heart* which he had *whittled* to this sentimental form for the niece of our host, Mrs. L., of Galveston, a girlish figure, with a lovely high-bred face, and large, soft, shadowy eyes. This charming person is the daughter of Mrs. B., of Texas, a lady poetess well known to our Southern readers, whose scattered gems are being collected in book-form by a leading publisher.

Here, too, was one of the trio of inexorable "bachelor members," against whom our *belles* have for some time employed their sublimest efforts—the entire battery of their glances.

The Kansas question is not yet settled. We are like the Israelites in the wilderness; every day we seem on the verge of the promised land, and every evening we are as far from it as ever.

The anticipation of the *test* vote on the Senate bill drew together an immense crowd on Thursday last. The families of all of our distinguished statesmen, members of the foreign legations, brilliant *belles*, and most of our best residents, were drawn together to witness the important scene. After an hour of public time had been properly wasted in a sparring debate, carried on by the opposite siders of the House, who, like the populace of Rome during the carnival,

rapped each other down with flints formed into the semblance of sugar-plums, the Speaker announced the *test* vote as about to be taken. The effect of that announcement was electrical. There was an instant suspension of conversation in the galleries; the thronged house became hushed as death; eyes were strained, and lorgnettes leveled upon the floor. The scene there was most impressive. The light streamed in softened beauty through the ground-glass ceiling, and fell upon a mass of bowed heads, each member busy with paper and pencil recording the vote. There seemed an unusual solemnity in the voice of the reading clerk as he called each name. This, with the "Ay" or "No" of response, was the only sound that fell upon the listening ears of fifteen hundred spectators.

As the vote was drawing near conclusion, we could not but observe the significant aspect of things below us; it was impossible to avoid being struck with the general look of triumph on the Republican side of the hall, and from their attitudes and countenances it was evident that the result was in their favor. Mr. — stretched his figure up against his desk in an exulting manner. Mr. —, of North Carolina, (we wonder our pen does not refuse to record it,) elevated his hands, and clasped them over his head in a defiant manner; while Mr. — smiled and whispered to his neighbor.

The aspect of the members in our immediate vi-

cinity—the Southern side of the house—was, if possible, still more significant, though of a wholly different character. Pencils were thrown abruptly aside. Mr. Boyce, of South Carolina, sat listlessly, his arms drooping on his desk. Mr. Lamar, of Mississippi, arose and stretched himself as if his attitude was insupportable. Mr. Stephens, of Georgia, seemed in deep and painful meditation. Gen. Clark's (of Missouri) face looked sullen and stern; while Houston's (of Alabama) aspect had the moveless melancholy of an antique statue. Col. Keit hitched, and fidgeted, and twisted one limb around its brother in a somewhat incomprehensible fashion.

In the midst of this death-like stillness, Speaker Orr's clear, distinct, ringing voice, which seemed to make our ears tingle and our sight grow dim, announced the result. The spectacle became still more significant as a burst of applause rose from the Republicans. As that discordant sound fell upon the ears of the Southern members, Stephens's ghastly face became more ghastly, even to the lips. Gen. McQueen's forehead and features glowed with a feverish crimson. Gen. Clark's color changed, and he grew deadly pale. Lamar jerked himself into another posture; and Garret, of Virginia, gazed steadily up in the gallery, from whence the sound proceeded; while Col. Keit, with clenched hands, sprang to his feet and ordered the Speaker to have the galleries cleared, looking as if he would willingly

have issued orders at that moment for the construction of a gibbet fifty cubits high to exterminate the Mordecai of his abhorrence.

During a residence in Washington of some six years, we have never witnessed so exciting a scene, so imposing a spectacle. A vast hall, with seats rising row upon row, and filled with fifteen hundred human beings, intent upon no fictitious representation, no tragedy of the stage, but the victory or defeat of a great principle involving constitutional right. Can those Southern members who have voted against this measure realize the magnitude, the fearful responsibility which they have incurred? It is a solemn task to compute the results which may flow from their defeat of this bill. Have they been faithful to the principles on which our *Union* is framed? faithful to the *Constitution* which distributes the validity, while it secures the *unity* of the whole? Their vote has gone forth to the country; they have assumed a responsibility which can be shifted to no one else. The result must show whether they have not contributed to paralyze the energies of their own section, planting discord and confusion.

XC.

SCENE IN THE HOUSE ON THE DAY OF ADJOURNMENT.

WASHINGTON, JUNE, 1858.

IT had been rumored that Congress would positively adjourn on each of the four days of the last week; but, like the Israelites in the wilderness, every day we seemed on the verge of Pisgah, and every evening as far from it as ever.

But the announcement in the morning papers yesterday that the adjournment had been officially fixed for that day drew a large number of spectators to the galleries. We joined a party of friends, and reached the Capitol grounds about one o'clock. The air was all astir with life; the delicious fragrance of the beds; the tall stems of the tulips, whose buds disclosed the pale-green leaflets within; and bushes bright with snow-white blossoms, afforded some excuse for the exulting notes of the birds, who were making a delightful fuss about the return of summer.

The lower part of the grounds were deserted; even the omnibus agents, whose business tied them down to the gate, looked as if they would gladly partake of what was going on above.

In the Rotunda little pages were scudding from the House to the Senate, their arms filled with vast piles of documents, Congressional records, etc. In the little ante-room, adjoining the Rotunda, the "pic-

ture-boy" stood, as usual, with one or two graphic likenesses suspended in imposing dignity, but no longer attracting loungers to satiate their curiosity with a survey of the internal marvels of which the suspended engraving was the outward sign.

As we passed along to the galleries, we glanced in at the open door of one of the "Committee-rooms," where all was confusion; whole lanes of books seemed to have overflowed the book-cases, and were wandering in confusion over the floor: ponderous government works, solidly bound, and others, lighter in structure, as if the inmates were preparing for a "move."

In the Old Hall two or three of the smallest pages—sweet little fellows in white jackets and cambric collars—had taken advantage of the general confusion, and were amusing themselves with great glee,—one on a tin trumpet, a farewell present from some amiable "Hon.," on which he was performing with more delight to himself than to his hearers; another discharging the ramrod of a pop-gun with great effect, causing a general nervousness to pervade the little group.

Within the House Hall we found increased confusion and clamor. The Clerk's stentorian voice reading aloud "bills" as rapidly as they were to be hurried through; "members" darting up and down; while others were quietly seated, disemboweling the contents of their desks. Among the latter was one

individual who presented a striking contrast to the flaccid cravats, disheveled heads, and disordered toilets around. There was about him an air of refinement which was not suited to that turbulent throng, which indicated to us that he was more of a scholar and dreamer than a politician. When we entered (his seat was immediately below us) he was occupied in clearing out his desk, looking over the heaps of letters it contained, some of which, from their appearance, seemed invitations; letters from constituents, massive missives from "Claim Agents," etc., were put methodically together in a pile.

He still continued searching among the heaps of papers, until he lighted upon a small missive with a superscription which seemed to arrest his attention. It was a lady's hand-writing. We thought we could see the delicate little crowquill touches, and it was certainly worn to a diaphanous slightness by incessant reference. The sight of this seemed to inspire reverie, for he sat several moments, with a vague and abstracted dreaminess of eye, gazing on the snowy envelope, then carefully placed it in his coat pocket, while the other packages were given to a page, who carried them out.

It is not necessary to tell our readers that this "Hon." is a *bachelor member*. The contrast this little scene affords to the matter-of-fact *married member* seated near him sufficiently indicated it. The unsentimental manner in which the latter heaps

up a pile of letters from his absent wife plainly shows that for him the sentiment and romance of life is ended.

Among those who were most *quietly busy* in attending to the closing business of the House, we noticed the member from South Carolina, General McQueen, a gentleman whose sound head and modest bearing seem to be appreciated, even among his more brilliant contemporaries. Happy the constituency that send such men to Congress!

It is whispered that a highly-talented member of the religious world is to carry off the prize of one of our most courted belles. Oh what a falling off for our fashionable beaux! To be *refused* for a man unknown in their circle, who wears a short-waisted coat! It is *too* much. Was it for *this* they excruciated themselves in tight boots? To be "given the mitten" for a man who walks with his ears buried in his collar! All the world seem in league to fling it in their teeth.

XCI.

CLOSE OF THE SEASON.

WASHINGTON, JUNE, 1858.

THE gay season is over; parties are over; Gautier lays no more suppers; and Mrs. ——— boasts only one or two party-berthes in her bay window. An

end to endless visits and endless visitors. An end to Gitting's countless dinners, and half a dozen private parties of a night.

It is the time when business grows dull, and business-men duller; it is the time that "William" loveth not, and Miss Wilson cannot abide—though the first may be consoled by the ghosts of departed ribbons and the last by visions of summer party-dresses.

The winter has been one of unprecedented brilliancy. We do not suppose that a Cabinet has at any time boasted among its members so many examples of beauty and elegance, or a season in Washington so many magnificent entertainments. But these enjoyments are over, and now come the drawbacks. Pecuniary cares intrude into the minds of many who remember with a shudder that the "end of the season" is assigned as the time of payment. Our belles become perplexed by a thousand vague presentiments. Every single knock at the door seems annunciatory of some *trifling bill*, some *small account*. They have preternatural warnings of lists of unpaid items for ribbons, needles, perfumery, and all the contemptible nothings of a lady's department; and then standing bills,—but it is needless to anticipate. The sentence of *not at home* is framed at this season in contradiction to the usual terms, and runs, *no exclusion except on business*.

Political dinner-givers now know to a fraction the value of Hock, and cost of private dishes. On com-

ing in they find wafered letters lying on hall tables bearing their superscription, flourished in all the suspicious perfections of the clerkly art. When they venture to unfold the dreaded page, it is to behold those tremendous perpendicular columns, marshaled in fatal array and dated with accurate and insulting minuteness, which are more terrible to the eye than were columns of the British forces to the imperial fugitive of Waterloo.

At post-hour the postman brings a pile of brown enveloped letters, which, upon opening, they find to be very unsatisfactory fac-similes of the other missives, containing expressions of gratitude for past favors, with a "small account," which they conceive it must be agreeable to look over and settle at this time. The united enormity of these debts render a chapter on finance highly necessary.

To many a belle this season has been one long triumph, where all have offered admiration, all paid homage. And yet, dear reader, her career, however dazzling, her success, however brilliant, has not been attended without some exhaustion. Even she has sometimes felt *lone* in the crowded drawing-room. At the close of all, is there not a void that no earthly good can fill? Ah! if she is just to herself, she will answer there is a void. A "season in Washington"—pleasant, but evanescent; a thing of vapor, bound by a chain of gilded water-drops.

CXII.

SOJOURN AT THE VIRGINIA SPRINGS—SEN. BATES—COL. HAYNE—
PROF. BLEDSOE—PROF. PRATT.

VIRGINIA SPRINGS, AUGUST, 1858.

AMONG the guests at this popular resort, (where we have determined to spend a season,) is the recently elected Senator from our own little State, Delaware, Hon. Daniel Bates. Mr. B. is distinguished in his own section as a profound and able lawyer, and a gentleman of the highest personal character. We have also the venerable Col. Morris, a native of South Carolina, though a resident on his own beautiful estate, (Morrisania,) Harlem, New York. This gallant and chivalrous relic of the "old school," is nephew of the celebrated "Governor Morris," who was appointed Minister to the Court of France by General Washington, and pronounced at that Court the handsomest man of his day.

The lady of Mr. W., a planter from Alabama, was in a rose-colored *glasse* silk, with costly flounces of superb lace. Prominent in the ball-room, was a fine-looking youth of some twenty years, Mr. D. of Natchez, Mississippi, the only son of his mother, a widow. There was present also a sweet dimpled-face, with wavy brown hair and eyes of the mildest blue.

The marine corps of Washington has been ad-

mirably represented here in the person of Lieutenant T. His gallant bearing, agreeable manners, and uniformly correct deportment, have won general respect. The commercial world has been also represented by the gentlemanly bankers, Messrs. Fant and Rittenhouse. The interesting lady of the former has been much admired.

But the established favorite of the ladies here is Col. Hayne, of Charleston. It requires no close observation to read, in the refined simplicity of this gentleman's manners, the genuine kindness of his heart. He seems to bear within himself a standard of lofty honor and pure sentiment, which the opposite sex are not slow to perceive and recognize. His manners might serve as a model for that of a perfect gentleman of the *old school*. He amuses our *belles* with anecdotes of his varied and incidental life in the countries he has visited and the wonders he has seen.

We have several specimens of the *Old Line Whig party*, who are scattered about in a very loose way, and seem sadly in want of a leader. For ourselves, we admire antiquity—even the relics of this glorious party have a charm for us.

Among the most regretted departures of the season have been the family of Col. W. of Alabama. The engaging appearance and lovely manners of his daughters have won the admiration of all who are capable of appreciating that sweetness of temper

which constitutes the charm of social life at a watering-place.

Among the late arrivals are Judge Tuck and lady, of Annapolis, Maryland. The countenance of the latter is clouded with sadness. Nothing seems to change the expression of a face that tells a sad tale of a recent funeral in her home; of a room made dismal forever by the presence of a coffin and a little motionless ridge upon the bed.

As she sits with her abstracted look, it almost seems as if a little white phantom would rise to meet her; as if a laughing voice would start up beside her.

Alas! the faltering step will no more be heard; the dimpled face rest never more upon her knees. The nursery may be the same in its accustomed furniture, and tokens of a recent presence may be scattered about: moveless, broken toys, pieces of dissected dolls; or they may have been stealthily removed to some spot sacred to that child's memory. But there is no trace of occupation there. Reader, you who have lost a child, your eyes will brim with tears as you read this, and you can guess from the strength of your own loss what such a blank is.

Here, too, we have Professor Bledsoe, of the University of Virginia, an earnest and single-hearted man, who, more than most studious men, forms a connecting link between the past and the future. Emphatically a scholar in his habits and tastes, devoted to the labors of his responsible position, avoiding the

scenes of public life and popular applause, seeking his highest inspiration in the investigation of his favorite themes, he makes a more profound impression on the world than can be readily imagined by those who are insensible to the subtle character of the scholar's influence. We believe it is conceded that this gentleman is far in advance of his cotemporaries, both in just conceptions of the purposes of education and in sound and exact learning.

The guests had, on Sabbath last, an intellectual treat, by the Rev. Dr. Cummins, of Washington, in an able discourse of great power and eloquence. His subject was "The uses of life," and his arguments profound and masterly. He proved, beyond the power of contradiction, that life was a *discipline only*. He laid bare the hollowness of life pursued in any other light.

We felt, as we listened, that another name might one day be added to the roll of Delaware's illustrious sons. Dr. C. is yet young, and we predict for him a brilliant maturity. He seems (unlike many in his profession) to follow his high calling from a love of doing good, not because it is expedient or conducive to maintaining an advantageous position in the world.

Professor Pratt, of the University of Tuscaloosa, is also here, and preached on last Sabbath. His sermon was about heaven, and there was such a pathos in his tones, that all who heard him felt that he spoke of that which he did know. All of life looked

empty and worthless, save the one narrow path—the path leading sometimes over rugged hills, where sharp stones goad the weary feet, sometimes through green pastures and beside still waters of peace.

XCIII.

DRESS BALL—MISS H.—MRS. HINSTON.

VIRGINIA SPRINGS, AUGUST, 1858.

THE hours devoted to dinner and the evening nap were over yesterday sooner than usual, and, at an early hour, at many up-stairs windows lights might be seen which marked where our belles were trying our Abigails' patience. By eight o'clock the chandeliers in the ball-room displayed a blaze of illumination; light strains resounded under its roof, and light footsteps re-echoed their inspiration. When we entered, the graceful *Lancers* were being danced, and we prepared ourself to enjoy the pleasure produced after long estrangement from this fascinating quadrille.

What a beautiful sight it was! Floating away to that bounding music,—now far away, like garlands of fairies, now near, showing us lovely women, with every ornament of graceful dress. Bright colors flashed on the eye, and were gone, and succeeded by others as lovely in the rapid movements of the dance.

Smiles dimpled every face, and tones of happiness murmured indistinctly through the room in every pause of the conversation.

We will, dear reader, separate some of the figures that formed this joyous and brilliant whole, though we cannot attempt to do justice to the raven tresses, fair hair, blue, black, hazel, and all manner of colored eyes, dimples, blushes, ruby lips, white teeth, pretty feet, and gentle accents.

The first object that caught our eye in the rapid mazes of the *Lancers* was the belle emphatically of the evening, Miss H., of Eutaw, Alabama, whose serene face, tranquil gentleness of manner, and feminine composure, present a beautiful contrast to the flippant levity of too many here. This very lovely person was in simple white; her hair of a deep, dark auburn, parted plainly over eyes such as always accompany this rare shade of hair,—eyes of a warm, clear brown. As this volume goes to press we receive the cards to Miss H.'s wedding with a talented young Representative from Tennessee, Col. Wright.

Mrs. Hinston, a young married lady, sister of Miss H., was present in a superb brocade silk, a substance boasting the consistency of wainscoat of moderate solidity, in which Lady Washington might have appeared on the occasion of the first *levee*.

In the same quadrille was a young bride from Florida, Mrs. Gamble, slender and graceful in figure, with large, soft, dark eyes like a child's; and, near

by, Miss W., of Warrenton, the most buoyant, joyous being, whose smile and voice find an unerring way to the heart.

Mr. R., a talented young member of the bar, from Montgomery County, was one of the prominent beaux of the evening.

In the same quadrille, dressed with great simplicity in white mull, was Miss Bessie —, of Savannah, Ga.,—the charm of our house, a sweet little fairy, who thinks it possible for a little lady to lead a very pleasant life without being assisted in her expenses or disturbed in her diversions by a gentleman calling himself her husband; in other words, is provokingly disposed to have her own way, not being matrimonially inclined. Our peerless rival, in a robe of French muslin, with basque of lace and velvet, presented, on this evening, a perfect type of the old ideal loveliness worshiped in the groves and temples of Greece. Superb creature! with her regal form and high-bred face, there is a charm in her manners which is, to us, irresistible. And that pretty little snow-drop from Warrenton, who says her say in so pleasant and unpretending a manner; and Miss W., of Baltimore, so ethereal looking, so fair—not as daylight, but as moonlight. Poor girl! she had been hunted into a corner by one of her throng adorers, who is affected by those electric influences too often exercised by single ladies of

large fortune over single gentlemen of moderate means.

Among the seated spectators we noticed the honorable member from Virginia, Mr. Letcher, who is recognized as one of the first men of his State, and already quoted, by the voice of fame, for its highest political honors. In Congress this gentleman makes few splendid outbursts, is little cited for eloquence, and few rave about him as an orator; and yet, practical men see in him the unboasting Hercules, whose shoulder is ever to the wheel of his party.

Sitting permanently benched beside the honorable member from Virginia was a group of *gentlemanly fellows*, as they are termed, with nothing to say and nothing to do, and fulfilling both duties entirely to their own satisfaction.

Among the late arrivals are Mr. J. I. Middleton, of Georgetown, S. C., (son of our former Minister to Russia,) and lady,—the latter a lovely woman, in delicate health, with traces of great beauty. She has an intonation of voice and winning charm of manner, while Mr. M. seems to possess a fund of information on all subjects, unfailingly agreeable, with no effort in his conversation, nothing overstrained in the tone of his mind. The total absence of pretension are merits which the artificialities of a watering-place would render doubly attractive.

We have the presence also of Mr. Ingraham, planter, from Louisiana, and brother of the distin-

guished lawyer of that name in Philadelphia; Mr. Tabor, of Charleston, brother of the lamented editor of the *Mercury*; Mr. Ravenel, of the same city, and Mr. Townsend, a talented young member of the bar from Marlborough district, South Carolina.

The navy is admirably represented in the person of Captain P. of Philadelphia, whose very step has a quarter-deck brevity; while his fine manners and gallant bearing command universal respect.

Among the guests here is Mr. D., a planter from Louisiana, son of the former Chief-Justice of Maryland. The lady of this gentleman is known as one of the most brilliant and intellectual woman in the South. Estimable and excellent, she seems like refined gold amid the baser metals of society. The sister of Mrs. D., a beautiful girl from Natchez, Mississippi, who was, last summer, the belle of the "White Sulphur," is also here. But, alas! no longer the star of the ball-room, but in close mourning for the death of an idolized mother. Miss E. has a face such as Titian would have delighted to paint, the expression of the eye being such as the old artists used to lend to the celestial beings whose hair bordered on golden, as the natural accompaniment of a transparent complexion.

The ball closed with a Scotch reel; and not a son of the mist could throw his Highland fling more ardently, or enjoy the sparkle which inspires the effort, than those who went through this closing figure. We

love a Highland reel ; it is one of the pleasantest little bits of madness in the world. When Pope wrote about "wafting the soul above upon a jig," he was clearly thinking of a Highland reel.

XCIV.

PUBLIC MEN—SCENE IN THE GALLERY.

VIRGINIA SPRINGS, AUGUST, 1858.

THE appearance of several *eligible honorables* during the past week has caused an intense sensation among the *belles* of "Virginia Springs." The tranquil cabins are in an uproar. A fair nullifier from South Carolina walked over the lawn, under an umbrella, during a heavy shower, to acquaint a *belle* from the *Empire State* with the news of an *honorable member's* arrival. But the anti-slavery *beauty* was not the one to be startled into a confession of satisfaction. He might be pro-slavery ; and if so she should not be introduced to him. In vain the fair *fire-eater* protested that we never allowed political predilections to interfere with watering-place sociability. The fair *anti* was inflexible.

But this is only an exceptional case ; the rest of the feminine world are in ecstasies. As to the *dandy beaux*, they are indignant at this uproar about *men* who tie their cravats as they cord their

portmanteau,—that men who dress like dustmen and wear *such cravats* should presume to rival them.

But *honorable members* are here recognized by other signs than careless toilets and flaccid collars. There is no mistaking them even here; their very jokes are parliamentary; and they have been so long accustomed to *rise to explain*, that they find it difficult to accomplish such an evolution in a sitting position. Their anecdotes are authenticated by *dates*; they always speak as if before a committee, and scarcely know how to leave a room without the ceremony of *pairing off*.

They are happily unconscious of the interest taken in their movements. Engrossed heart and soul in public life, they look upon watering-places as resorts where politicians congregate during the hot weather to form plans for the ensuing session, and commit those follies which men commit who hunt after popularity. They have not a thought to waste upon the ladies, except as part and parcel of their fathers, who may be men of some account to their party, and to be conciliated through the medium of their pretty daughters.

Dear readers, we wish you could see the scene which meets our eye as we write! It is a golden evening, and the setting sun is streaming through the leaves of a beautiful linden which waves before our window. Out beyond, under the calm sky, veiled with a mist rather than with a cloud, rise the

high, dark outlines of the mountains, shutting in the circling cabins as if they lay in a nest. We could fancy that in a scene so lovely no care or woe could enter, but would be charmed away and disappear before the sight of these glorious guardian mountains. But, alas! we know the truth that earth has no barrier which avails against the envy and malice of the world.

On the gallery below us the scene is most animated. In one corner sits a young bride in all the ruminative misery of her first widowhood. Not far off, a baby in placid dignity in her nurse's arms. The fresh, soft, *peachy* complexion is really tempting, and a fair girl goes up to coo and smile at the wee thing, and she is about to snatch a kiss, when baby lifts up his sturdy right arm and hits his tormentor a great blow in the face. Near by, the fine-looking resident-physician (Dr. Davidson) is listening with resignation to a cross-questioning concerning the nature, progress, and result of spring number two, three, and four. Another is inquiring for the health of Mrs. —, suggesting in a delicate manner the utility of biscuit-powder and goat's whey. In another direction, a sweet, interesting young widow from Norfolk is listening to a Buena Vista hero, who is telling campaigning tales that would fill volumes of the standard novels, recounting hair-breadth 'scapes in conflagrated convents and slaughtered villages. Sweet Mrs. W., with your gentle manner and youthful

face, *long, long* shall we remember the touching story of your early bereavement, so artlessly told to us with quivering lip and moistened eye.

The solemn stars of the "Virginia Springs" had witnessed their betrothal, and the green forest-leaves, fluttering their fresh lips together, murmured it to each other; and in a few months he carried the holy vow to heaven and saw it engraved on angelic tablets.

Near the entrance-door a young mother is holding a chubby hand soothingly between her own, and singing with a faint, soft voice a little lullaby hymn, the child nestling in her bosom and sweetly sleeping. In another direction the handsome member of a celebrated mercantile firm in Macon, Georgia, is surrounded by a circle of our *belles*, who are listening to a searching criticism on the genuineness of a *point-lace* handkerchief which has been submitted to his critical eye. This gentleman, of the firm of "Bostick & Kein," is widely known as the *Stewart* of the South, his importations being confined entirely to ladies' wardrobe. Right under our window (most provokingly interrupting us every ten minutes) are *the* beaux of the "Virginia Springs," a refined and gentlemanly young lawyer from Montgomery, a handsome young widower from Tallahassee, Florida, and a stylish new-comer, a Mr. H., from Savannah, Georgia, who is already a bright particular star with our *belles*.

Apropos of this State. It has certainly sent most lovely women and most interesting masculines to the "Virginia Springs;" and children, *too*—sweet little Annie T. from Augusta, with her silvery, care-free heart-laugh, which we love so to hear from children, and whose exquisite performances on the piano made our idle *belles* blush for very shame. And Mr. Cobb, with his interesting family. Ah! Mr. Secretary, you stand high in the world as a wise politician; but your brother has looked above even *that*,—his beautiful *life* showing that there is a higher need than mere worldly success! Georgia may well be proud of this to us very interesting family.

XCIV.

SCENE ON THE LAWN—ENGLISH LORD INCOG.

VIRGINIA SPRINGS, AUGUST, 1858.

THE mornings pass here as mornings ever pass where pretty women are met together. Some read, some play, some work, *all talk*. Here a purse, half made, promises, when finished, to make some hero happy. Then there is a chat about the latest fashions, caps, and bonnets. As the day grows old, parties scud over meadows, gallop down hills, scamper through valleys; some of the gentlemen shoot all day, and in the evening fall asleep just when

they are wanted. With all, your appearance is your own act. If you like, you may remain, like a nun, in your cell till dinner time, but no later. Privacy is granted you through the day that you may not exhaust your powers of pleasing before night, and that you may reserve for those favored hours all the new ideas that you have collected in the course of the day.

As we write, the parlor and lawn are filled with a gay multitude. A lady and gentleman are at the piano, and we have had a crashing sonata of the high-pressure instrumental school, as if they were bringing the sky, and the earth, and the two extremities of the instrument together. A flirtation on the sofa was disturbed by this rattling of keys, and chaotic confusion of sharps, flats, and naturals; and one of the two looked as if he felt fully capable of the manslaughter of the gentleman who was thus entertaining us. But for the fair singer's azure eyes and floating ringlets, he might have found it in his soul to include *her* in the massacre.

The music on the lawn rings out the hour for tea, and from its recesses pour in the groups, making the smooth sward look like a plateau of animated flowers worked on green velvet. Ah! those beautiful demi-toilettes, so difficult to attain, yet, when attained, the dress most modest, most captivating, most worthy the grace of woman! Those airy flats, sheltering from the sun, yet not enviously concealing a feature or a

ringlet that a painter would draw for his exhibition-picture ! Those summery robes, covering the person more to show its outline better ; those complexions which but betray their transparency in the sun ; lips in which the blood is transparent when between you and the light ; cheeks finer-grained than alabaster ! The human race was at less perfection in the days of Cleopatra than to-day on the lawn at Virginia Springs.

As the delicious music of a band steals up from the shade of a linden-tree, we will note a group approaching : Miss S., of Point Coupee Parish, La., whose complexion is in itself sufficient to entitle her to the claim of surpassing loveliness. We never saw a skin that so completely justified the old and hackneyed comparison of the lily ; we never saw eyes that so completely exemplified the equally worn-out simile of *dovelike*. And yet, dear reader, this fairy, this sylph, is eating with voracity a huge loaf of maple-sugar. We should as soon have expected the Venus de Medecis to sup on cheese and onions, as for this ethereal creature to devour this damp substance. Indeed, maple-sugar constitutes the diet of many of our *belles*. The handsome masculine, who seems so perfectly satisfied to be at her side, is Mr. S., of Mobile, Alabama, who has been traveling abroad—not a galloping tour, the merit of which consists in the computation of so many hundred miles a week. He has brought with him to his native land a most in-

teresting communicativeness—a facility in receiving and imparting impressions attained in continental society. We have learned from him a great deal of Italy—the classics, its modern writers, painters, historians, philosophers.

We have had a member of the English nobility among the visitors here this summer, (Lord Walmsley, of “Westbourne Terrace,” Hyde Park, London.) The distinguished gentleman traveled “incog.,” and his titled dignity only transpired through the postmaster as he was upon the point of leaving. The effect, when it became known, was electrical: guests were neglected, the business of the establishment at a stand-still, and the departing “lord” became the nucleus of a reverential crowd, formed by waiters, who had decamped, leaving the stately head functionary to attend to the abandoned plates with his own hands; and even he, coming out to look for them with “fell intent,” forgot his anger and remained to see; chambermaids, too, who ran out on errands, with instructions to be quick, had heard the news; hostlers utterly reckless of their duty; and, on the gallery above, *belles* all curiosity and blushes, crowded up, some with their flats, and some without. Even the driver of the Lexington stage, which drove up at the moment, instead of finding an obsequious waiter ready to catch the reins, and an admiring mob of idlers, stood utterly alone, entirely overlooked.

The unconscious object of all this excitement came slowly out, his face wearing a look of English sternness; and as he approached the stage the crowd made a large circle, and some little errand boys sprang from his path; one of our own little mulatto favorites stumbled in his haste, not pausing to rise again, but groveled out of reach, upon his hands and knees, as if he expected to be decapitated or run through the body; indeed, the little fellow seemed prepared for anything.

However, the distinguished gentleman did not do anything of the sort, but took his seat with a very quiet air. A whisper passed along the awe-struck throng as the stage drove off, though nobody thought of leaving so long as a vestige of the vehicle was to be seen.

XCVI.

APPEARANCE OF THE AVENUE—HARPER & MITCHELL'S—GALT'S.

WASHINGTON, OCTOBER, 1858.

OUR city presents unmistakable evidence of preparation for the opening of the season. Business, which has for months languished, is reviving with redoubled vigor. Pennsylvania Avenue is cleaning its windows; Steven's fancy-store is embellished with lovely head-dresses, labyrinths of lace and flowers, from Broadway; and Ford & Co. are refreshing their

blue and red bottles with new infusions of indigo and cochineal. The plate-glass windows of Harper & Mitchell's elegant establishment exhibits fabrics worthy of a bazaar in the *Boulevards*,—superb moire antiques, shawls which transport one to the vales of Cashmere, filmy handkerchiefs of *Point d'Alençon*, and exquisite breakfast-robcs—Parisian *chef d'œuvres* in style and *tournure*.

Farther up the Avenue the doorway of Clagett & Co.'s large dry-goods emporium is blockaded with fresh boxes, bales, and crates—bales of India goods with an aroma of the tropics about them, and boxes from China which establish a mystic connection with short Chinese, with impassible feet thrust into impracticable shoes. The head clerks may be seen writing rapidly, taking invoices of goods, and surrounded by piles of paper, patterns, specimens—everything that covers the desk of a flourishing merchant.

Little farther on, in the elaborately finished new store of Galt & Brother, you may find an architectural beauty equal to that of which the Ispahan architects dreamed, and jewels as splendid as the Orientals described. The spirit of beauty might be pleased to sit invisible in this superb establishment. Pearls and precious stones from every part of the earth, goblets and vases of every form and shape, meet the eye. Without moving, one seems to be circumnavigating the globe. Beautiful sets of mosaics,

like old Venetian scenes unpainted, transplant us to other climes where the sun shines, the birds sing, and flowers bloom forever. Sets of coral wrought into a hundred exquisite elaborations bring to our mind the remote sigh of the weary sea moaning around desolate coral reefs, the howl of winds and the sound of dashing water ; cameos, rifled from the sanctuaries of Italy, gods of Greece, and heroes of Rome, recall the imperial city, the fragrance of blossoming vineyards, orange groves, and gorgeous priestly processions.

In the mirrors and Psyche-glasses one may see reflected bronze and alabaster statuettes, lifelike representations of exquisite beauty, which might be put into the niches of palaces for ornament. Small Cupids of perfect form, mailed warriors of old chivalry and romance, falconers holding fierce birds upon their wrists, and a Greek Antinous, with drooped head, and full, smooth limbs.

Opposite, on the pavement of Parker & Brother, huge hogsheads may be seen perspiring brown sugar, and oozing slow molasses, as if nothing tropical could keep within bounds, but must continually expand and exude.

The skill of the many-handed Washington carpenters have converted *Willard's* moderate dimensions into a colossal *Hotel*, with a finely-proportioned dining-room, capable of seating eight hundred persons. The house is entirely refurnished, and in the

refitting they have avoided the gaudy superabundance of gilding by which so many Northern hotels are now disfigured. There is nothing gorgeous; all subdued, all in good taste, all calculated for use and personal enjoyment. The reception parlors were after the Parisian fashion: no mismatched tables of nick-nackery; nothing that recalls the curiosity-shop is to be seen.

The *National Hotel*, too, exhibits marks of great improvement, and seems to flourish admirably in the hands of the present accommodating proprietors. The kitchen was last year entirely demolished and new ranges and implements introduced, and the table is said to be remarkable for the excellence of its viands and the attention of its waiters, while the neat and admirably ventilated parlors present a gratifying contrast to their condition in years gone by. There has been no return of the sickness during the past or present year, and it seems in that respect to have entirely redeemed its character.

But while rejoicing in these signs of our city's prosperity, we have heard, with a thrill of sympathy, that our friends in the South have been visited with the terrible fever, which has brought deep affliction to many a household. We have shuddered at the accounts which have reached us of clergymen dying in consequence of their attendance, of the swift mortality, not merely among the decently poor, but

among the higher classes of society. From all this we have been mercifully spared. The pestilence has passed us by; law and order is restored to our city; riot and bloodshed no longer reign supreme.

XCVII.

DEATH OF SIR GORE OUSELEY'S SON.

WASHINGTON, NOVEMBER, 1858.

A REGRETTED chasm has been made in our social world by the departure, to Central America, of Sir Gore Ouseley and his amiable and accomplished wife. A heavy family affliction, the sudden death of their eldest and only remaining son, which occurred a few months since, excited much sympathy in our community. The deceased had been appointed Secretary of Legation to his father, (whom, it is known, is here as Envoy Extraordinary to Central America,) and was preparing to join his parents, when he was seized with the fever of the country, and died at Assumption, the capital of Paraguay, after twenty-four hours' illness. This lamented youth gave great promise of literary distinction, inheriting the fine literary talents of his father, who is the author of "South American Sketches," and several other papers of much interest; also the fine taste of his grandfather, the

late learned Oriental scholar, who was Ambassador to Persia, and published many works on Eastern antiquities, leaving a mine of Oriental and classical learning that will remain a monument of his great industry and talent. His mother, Lady Ouseley, is an American lady, (Miss Van Ness,) whose father was our Ambassador to Spain. She has resided, since her marriage, in Europe, and has visited most of the courts on the Continent, with her husband, in his diplomatic capacity.

The deceased's proficiency in languages was very remarkable. At the age of seventeen he became master of the French, Spanish, German, and Portuguese languages; then turned his attention to Oriental literature, and, in a short time, mastered all the difficulties of the Persian language, and could read it with facility. He was, from childhood, a great student, and left many valuable manuscript notes of the various countries he had visited before he was twenty-one, giving immense information on their productions, customs, etc. At the time of his death he was studying the Hebrew, wishing to read the Bible in the original. In his last letter to his mother he speaks of his progress in Hebrew; that it was already free from the darkness that enveloped it at first; and expressed great happiness at the light that had all at once burst into the darkness of that old language, making a moon at midnight.

He is said to have been a most devoted and affectionate son, the only sorrow he ever caused his parents being that of his death. His early and premature loss is the stone rolled to the door of the sepulchre that shuts in all the sunshine of his father's life. Since the news of his son's death, old age appears to have come suddenly upon him, seaming his face with premature wrinkles. In all this city there has been to us no sight so touching as his whitened hair, which this heavy dispensation had, in a few weeks, changed from iron-gray.

We are told that "whom the gods love die young," and, we must believe, that a wise Providence has freed his fettered spirit from its prison of clay and translated its noble energies to a wider sphere of action, where its enlarged desire for knowledge shall find the food, so earnestly craved on earth, without uneasiness or exhaustion.

His death-bed—although no cool maternal hand bathed his hot forehead, or wiped away the damps of the death-agony—was cheered by devoted attention. All that human skill could do to alleviate pain or save life was done; and one of the greatest sources of consolation that his bereaved parents have, is the assurance that God's fiat, and not man's negligence, was the cause of their great loss.

In a lonely graveyard in South America rest the remains of this gifted and idolized son. Far from

the hum and shock of men, the waters of the Platte flow tranquilly by. The budding leaves of spring, expanding into the greenness and beauty of summer, shed their fragrance around his tomb.

“Henceforward, when the warm, soft breath of spring
Bids cowslips star the meadows thick and sweet;
When doves are in the green wood murmuring,
And children wander with delighted feet;
Alas! that spring-time will be welcomed with a sigh,
For thy lamented sake, who was so young to die.”

We have had the pleasure of a delightful visit from that brilliant authoress and accomplished woman, Mrs. Octavia Le Vert, of Mobile. Her look of youthfulness is such that, until the announcement of her name, we supposed it was Miss Le Vert, her daughter. During her stay she fascinated us by a delightful flow of varying conversation, a description of “Sunnyside,” where she had been on a visit to Washington Irving; and “Idlewild,” Mr. Willis’s picturesque home on the Hudson; and anecdotes of *Mount Vernon*, which she had visited the day previous. Her conversation is remarkable for enthusiasm and power of expression, and her delightful animal spirits seem to be one of her choicest gifts. Lively, brilliant, she seems the favorite of every society she enters, and, in many respects, resembles that, to us, most lovely person, Mrs. Ritchie, a lady who possesses excelling qualities of heart, worth all

the talent in the world. We hope it will not be long before we look each other in the face again.

Our city is rapidly filling up with the families of those who design passing the winter in the metropolis. The more brilliant and dashing are engaging rooms in those smaller worlds, the National, Willard's and Brown's; while the more retiring and unostentatious are filling up the "Kirkwood House." The limited capacity and admirable regulations of this establishment give it much of the quiet of a well-ordered private family.

The Senate-chamber will be ready for the reception of that distinguished body. We think the objectors to the "House Hall" can find no ground for reasonable objections to this superb chamber. It reflects infinite credit upon the accomplished superintendent and architect, Captain Meigs and Mr. Walter. We regret that the hurry of going to press prevents us giving a full description of this really magnificent room.

XCVIII.

CLOSING SKETCH.

WASHINGTON, NOVEMBER, 1858.

DEAR reader, the pages allotted us to fill are expended, and our pen waits only the pause of our

fingers to conceal us from your view. We have gone into stifling crowds, in over-heated rooms, that we might present you with "*Sketches of Fashionable Life*," as it exists in the metropolis of the nation. Much that is good and elevating we find there. There is a holy domestic life, there are quiet homes and easy parlors—*homes* where abide the deepest springs of social life; homes where gentle memories steal upon us; quiet firesides that the whirl of gay life cannot encroach upon—a phase of life utterly unknown to the temporary dwellers at our hotels.

Much is said abroad of vice and wickedness in Washington. We think this impression is formed by those visiting us for a few weeks, and who, without really seeing anything of *citizen life*, go away disgusted with what they call "*our society*." True, we see much to weary and disgust; much toad-eating and fawning; friends supplanted and deserted; men who were once stars, forgotten and flung aside. We see also the little faults of great men; talent toiling thanklessly, leading a weary life in the service of their party. But we see that which makes our hearts beat with admiration and gratitude. We see men rich in no possession but mind, standing on a high platform, carving their names on the roll of fame, and exercising an influence which no piled-up wealth could command. We find the dearest ties of earth bound up in family circles of love and affection.

We find noble hearts in public life who do their duty; philanthropists who regard the highest welfare of their race.

Be just and shake us kindly by the hand at parting, and let us indulge the hope that you have been beguiled into idling away a few hours of your precious life by an agreeable companion, who sincerely hopes that her few little flowers, gathered by the wayside of "*Life*" here, may be acceptable, their fragrance grateful, and their fragility pardoned.

THE END.

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